AN ELEMENTARY
MIDDLE ENGLISH GRAMMAR

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GRAMMAR

BY

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To THE REVERED MEMORY

OF

DR. HENRY BRADLEY

AND

DR. SIR JAMES MURRAY

WHO DEVOTED THEIR LONG AND STRENUOUS
LIVES TO PROMOTING THE STUDY OF ENGLISH
WORD-LORE THIS MIDDLE ENGLISH GRAMMAR
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THE need of an elementary Middle English Grammar written on scientific and historical principles must long have been felt by pupils and teachers alike, and it is with a view of supplying this need that the present Grammar has been written. In writing it we have followed as far as possible the plan adopted in the *Elementary Old English Grammar*, our object being to furnish students with a concise account of the phonology and inflexions of the Middle English period. And in order that the book may form a kind of basis for the modern English period, we have in almost all cases chosen the examples illustrating the Middle English sound-changes from words which have survived in Modern-English. It will thus link up with a similar book dealing with the phonology and inflexions of New English, which is already in an advanced stage of preparation, and which will be published next year.

In dealing with the Middle English dialects, we have, as far as is possible in an elementary Grammar, endeavoured to exhibit the phonological and inflexional features of each group of dialects without attaching too great importance to any one of them. In this part of the work we have made considerable use of the modern dialects, as they help to throw much light upon many points of Middle English phonology.

As the book is not intended for specialists in English philology, some more or less important details have

been intentionally omitted. All or most of them will doubtless be found in Morsbach's *Mittelenglische Grammatik*, Halle, 1896, and Luick's *Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache*, Leipzig, 1914–21, if these two comprehensive grammars are ever completed, as well as some of them in *Chaucers Sprache und Verskunst* by B. ten Brink, third edition, edited by E. Eckhardt, Leipzig, 1920. We gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness to the above-mentioned works, and to Björkman's *Scandinavian Loan-words in Middle English*, Halle, 1900–2.

We are convinced that the student who conscientiously works through this book will find that he has gained a thorough general knowledge of Middle English sound-laws and inflexions, and has thereby, not only laid a solid foundation for further study of historical English grammar, but also for a fuller and more appreciative study of mediaeval English Literature.

In conclusion, we wish to express our sincere thanks to the Controller of the University Press for his great kindness in complying with our wishes in regard to special type, and to the Press reader for his valuable help with the reading of the proofs.

JOSEPH WRIGHT.
ELIZABETH MARY WRIGHT.

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THE rapidity with which a large first edition of this Grammar has been exhausted would seem to indicate that there was a real need for such a book among beginners of the subject at our universities.

In preparing this new Edition for press we have adhered strictly to our original plan, viz. that of furnishing students with a concise account of the phonology and inflexions of the Middle English period. From our long experience as teachers of the subject, we are convinced that this is the only satisfactory method. To have overburdened the book with a large number of details would only confuse the student and render him unable 'to see the wood for the trees'. Although we have preserved the original number of paragraphs, many of these have been enlarged, and others have been entirely re-written, especially in the phonology of the vowels of accented syllables and in the chapter on verbs.

In conclusion, we beg to express our heartiest thanks to the reviewers of the first edition for their useful suggestions, especially to Professor E. Ekwall in *Beiblatt zur Anglia*, vol. xxxv, pp. 226–8, Professor F. Holthausen in *Literaturblatt für germanische und romanische Philologie*, Jahrgang xlv, Nr. 10–12 (cols. 302–5), Professor E. Kruisinga in *English Studies*, vol. vi, pp. 162–3, and Professor F. Wild in *Englische Studien*, vol. lix, pp. 96–9. And lastly, we gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness

to the *Handbuch der mittelenglischen Grammatik*, Erster Teil: Lautlehre (Heidelberg, 1925), by our old friend the late Professor Richard Jordan, through whose untimely death the study of English Philology has suffered a great loss.

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CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS, ETC.

AN.	= Anglo-Norman	MHG.	= Middle High German
Angl.	= Anglian	Mod.	= Modern
C.Fr.	= Central French	N. or n.	= Northern
dial.	= dialect	NE.	= New English
ED.Gr.	= English Dialect Grammar	N. E. D.	= New English Dictionary.
EM.	= East Midland	NHG.	= New High German
ENE.Gr.	= Elementary Historical New English Grammar	Nth.	= Northumbrian
		NW.	= north-west(ern
EOE.Gr.	= Elementary Old English Grammar	OE.	= Old English
		O.Fr.	= Old French
Fr.	= French	O.Icel.	= Old Icelandic
Goth.	= Gothic	ON.	= Old Norse
Ken.	= Kentish	S. or s.	= Southern
Lat.	= Latin	Sc.	= Scottish
M. or m.	= Midland	W. or w.	= West
ME.	= Middle English	WM.	= West Midland
		WS.	= West Saxon

ƀ	= v in **vine**, **five**	ž	= s in **measure**
ð	= th in **then**	dž	= j in **just**
ʒ	= g often heard in German **sagen**	š	= sh in **ship**
		tš	= ch in **chin**
ŋ	= n in **finger**, **think**	χ	= ch in German **nacht**, **nicht**

The sign ‾ placed over vowels is used to mark long vowels. The sign ˛ placed under vowels is used to denote open vowels, as ę̄, ǭ, ęi, ǫi. The sign . placed under vowels is used to denote close vowels, as ẹ̄, ọ̄, ẹi, ẹu, ọu. Simple e in unaccented syllables denotes that the vowel was not pronounced, as come, hevenes, livẹde. The asterisk * prefixed to a word denotes a theoretical form, as cladd from older *clādd, *clothed*.

INTRODUCTION

§ 1. Middle English embraces that period of the English language which extends from about 1100 to 1500. The division of a language into fixed periods must of necessity be more or less arbitrary. What are given as the characteristics of one period have generally had their beginnings in the previous period, and it is impossible to say with perfect accuracy when one period begins and another ends. In fact many of the vowel-changes which are generally described as having taken place in early ME. did in reality take place in late OE., although early ME. writers often continued to use the traditional OE. spelling long after the sound-changes had taken place; this applies especially to æ̆, y̆, ĕa, ĕo. And just as it is impossible to fix the precise date at which one period of a language ends and another begins, so also it is not possible to do more than to fix approximately the date at which any particular sound-change took place, because in most languages, and more especially in English, the change in orthography has not kept pace with the change in sound.

§ 2. For practical purposes Middle English may be conveniently divided into three sub-periods :—(a) Early ME. extending from about 1100 to 1250. (b) Ordinary ME. extending from about 1250 to 1400. And (c) late ME. extending from about 1400 to 1500.

(a) Early ME. 1100-1250. The chief characteristics of this sub-period are :—The preservation in a great measure of the traditional OE. system of orthography, and the beginnings of the influence of Anglo-Norman orthography. The change of æ to a (§ 43), ā to ǭ in the dialects south of the Humber (§ 51), the lengthening of a, e, o in open syllables of dissyllabic words (§ 77), the formation of a large

number of new diphthongs of the -i and -u type (§§ 104, 105), the weakening of unaccented a, o, u to e (§ 134), the preservation for the most part of unaccented final -e (§ 139). The breaking up of the OE. inflexional system, especially that of the declensions of nouns, adjectives, and pronouns. The preservation of greater remnants of the OE. declensions of nouns, adjectives, and pronouns in the South than in the North and the Midlands. Grammatical gender was almost entirely lost in nouns (§ 314). Few Anglo-Norman loan-words found their way into the dialects of the South, still fewer into those of the Midlands, and hardly any at all into those of the north Midlands, and of the North.

(*b*) Ordinary ME. 1250–1400. The chief characteristics of this sub-period are :—The gradual formation of extensive literary dialect centres ; and in the fourteenth century, especially in the second half, the beginnings of a standard ME. which, excluding Scotland, became fully developed in the fifteenth century. The great influence of Anglo-Norman orthography upon the written language (§§ 7–21). Un-accented final -e had practically ceased to be pronounced in all the dialects. The limitation of the inflexion of nouns and adjectives chiefly to one main type in the North and the Midlands, and in the South to two main types— the strong with the inflexions of the old a-declension, and the weak. The introduction of a large number of Anglo-Norman words into all the dialects, even into those of the North.

(*c*) Late ME. 1400–1500. In this sub-period we can observe the gradual disappearance of the local dialect element from the literature of the period through the spread and influence of the London literary language. The close approximation of the system of inflexions to that of New English. The gradual cleavage between the Scottish and the northern dialects of England.

§ 3. In the present state of our knowledge it is not possible

to give more than a rough-and-ready classification of the ME. dialects, because we are unable to fix the exact boundaries where one dialect ends and another begins. Nor shall we ever be able to remedy this defect until we possess a comprehensive atlas of the modern dialects such as has been produced by France and Germany of their dialects. An atlas of this kind would enable English scholars to fix the dialect boundaries far more accurately than is possible at present, and to show conclusively that there was no such thing as a uniform northern, north Midland, east Midland, west Midland, or south Midland dialect in the ME. period, but that within each principal division there were many sub-dialects each possessing clearly defined phonological peculiarities.

§ 4. ME. is usually divided into three large groups of dialects :—

1. The Northern Group, including the dialects of the Lowlands of Scotland, Northumberland, Durham, Cumberland, Westmorland, the whole of Yorkshire except the south, and north Lancashire. Roughly speaking, the Humber and the Ouse formed the southern boundary, while the Pennine Chain determined its limits to the West.

2. The Midland Group, including the dialects of south Yorkshire, the whole of Lancashire except the north, the counties to the west of the Pennine Chain, the East Anglian counties, and the whole of the Midland area. It corresponded roughly to the Old Mercian and East Anglian areas. The Thames formed the southern boundary of this extensive group of dialects. This group is generally further subdivided into the north Midland, east Midland, west Midland, and south Midland dialects.

3. The Southern Group, including the dialects of the counties south of the Thames, Gloucestershire, and parts of Herefordshire and Worcestershire. This group is often further subdivided into the south Eastern dialects, also

sometimes called Kentish or the Kentish group of dialects, and the south Western dialects.

§ 5. So far as is possible in an elementary grammar we have endeavoured to exhibit the phonological and morphological features of each of the various groups of dialects without attaching too great importance to any one of them. And with this end in view considerable use has been made of the modern dialects, as they undoubtedly help to throw light upon many debatable points of ME. phonology which can never be satisfactorily settled in any other manner.

PHONOLOGY

CHAPTER I

ORTHOGRAPHY AND PRONUNCIATION

1. ORTHOGRAPHY

§ 6. The following brief sketch of ME. orthography is merely intended to draw the student's attention to the subject in a connected manner. To enter into it here with any degree of completeness would necessitate the repetition of much that properly belongs to other chapters. Long vowels were, of course, not marked as such in ME. manuscripts, but in order to avoid confusion they are here generally marked long.

§ 7. The ordinary ME. orthography is based partly on the traditional OE. orthography and partly on the Anglo-Norman (AN.). OE. ǣ, ĕa, and ĕo continued to be written in early ME. long after they had changed in sound. æ had become a over a large area of the country in the early part of the twelfth century (cp. § 43), but it often continued to be written æ and by AN. scribes e until well on into the second half of the thirteenth century. ea became æ in Late OE., but the ea often continued to be written until a much later date. And then the æ had the same further fate as the ordinary OE. æ above. The old traditional spelling with ǣ was preserved in the *Ormulum* (c. 1200), *Laȝamon* (c. 1205), and the Proclamation of London (1258), but in other monuments it, as also ǣ from older ēa, was generally written ę̈ from about the end of the twelfth century. ēa had also become ǣ, except in Kentish, by about the beginning of the eleventh century, although the ēa often continued to be written until a much later period. This change of ǣ to ę̈

was merely a letter change due to the influence of AN. orthography; the æ-sound itself remained in ME. until near the end of the fifteenth century when it became ę̄, see § 52, 2. Through æ and ēa falling together in sound in late OE. the ēa was sometimes written for old æ in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and also occasionally much later. At a still later period this writing of ēa for æ became the general way of expressing long open ę̄ of whatever origin, cp. NE. leap, deal, eat, ME. lę̄pen, dę̄len, ę̄ten, OE. hlēapan, dǣlan, etan. The old traditional spelling with eo, ēo was often preserved in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, although the eo, ēo had become e, ę̄ in sound in the northern and east Midland dialects, and ö, ȫ in the west Midland and southern dialects (except Kentish) in the twelfth century. And then through the influence of AN. orthography the ö, ȫ sounds came to be written o, ue, oe and sometimes u, see §§ 65, 198; and conversely eo occasionally came to be written for old e (§ 44) in those dialects where eo became e in early ME. The writing of e for æ (= OE. æ, ēa) and of e for ę̄ (= OE. ē, ēo) led to confusion in ME. orthography owing to long open ę̄ and long close ē being written alike, cp. leden, ded = OE. lǣdan *to lead*, dēad *dead* beside fet, crepen = OE. fēt *feet*, crēopan *to creep*.

§ 8. Long and short y̆ (= ŭ) became unrounded to ĭ over a large part of the country during the OE. period. The result was that monuments written in these extensive areas during the ME. period have both i and y to represent old long and short ĭ. In the late ME. period an attempt was made by some writers to restrict the use of y to express old long ī.

§ 9. Many of the changes which the OE. vowel-system underwent in ME. were not due to sound-changes, but were merely orthographical changes introduced by Anglo-Norman scribes. Examples of such changes are:—In those areas where the OE. short y (= ü) remained in the ME. period it came to be written u (like the u in Fr. lune), and the long

ȳ (= ū̆) came to be written u, ui (uy) from about 1170
onwards (§§ 49, 57). After the writing of u for y, and the
u, ui (uy) for ȳ had become general in those districts where
the long and short ü̆-sound had remained, the y began to be
written for ĭ, especially before and after nasals, u (= v),
w, and finally. This writing of y for ĭ gradually became
very common, and by the time of Chaucer it was also used
in other positions as well. From about the middle of the
thirteenth century o came to be written for u before and
after nasals, u (= v), and w. This writing of o for u in
these positions became pretty general towards the end of
the thirteenth century. The object of using y, o for i, u
in the above positions was primarily to avoid graphical con-
fusion. In late ME. o was also generally written for u
when followed by a single consonant + vowel. v was often
written for u initially, and u for v medially between vowels.
The writing of ou (ow) for ū became fairly common in the
second half of the thirteenth century, and in the fourteenth
century it became general. By the time of Chaucer it was
generally written ow when final and frequently also in
open syllables, especially before l, n, and v, but in other
positions it was mostly written ou. e came to be written
for æ (later a), ǣ (see above) in early ME., and through the
influence of Central O.Fr. orthography ie was sometimes
written for ę̄ in later ME., especially after the sound ę̄ had
become ī or was on the way to become ī, see §§ 50, 197, 2,
and *ENE. Gr.* § 31.

§ 10. In later ME. ea was occasionally used for ę̄, oa (ao)
for ǭ, and ou for ọ̄ in the fourteenth century before the ọ̄
had become ū (cp. § 50); the diphthongs ai, ei, oi, au, eu,
ou were often written ay, ey, oy, aw, ew, ow finally and
before n ; and ai (ay), ei (ey), oi (oy) were written for ā, ē,
ō in the northern dialects, see § 121.

§ 11. During the ME. period some attempt was made to
distinguish between long and short vowels in writing, but

only Orm made a systematic attempt to indicate long vowels by writing double consonants after short vowels. His system, however, broke down when a short vowel was in an open syllable. In this position he sometimes put a mark over the vowel, thus dăle *valley*, to indicate that the vowel was short. Orm's system was cumbersome, but it was not more so than some of the other attempts which were made to indicate long vowels. From the fourteenth century onwards long ē and ō were often indicated by writing them double in closed syllables and when final, but single in open syllables, as dęęd *dead*, dęęd *deed*; but dęlen *to deal*, męten *to meet*; bǫǫt *boat*, fǫǫt *foot*; but grǫpen *to grope*, brǫþer *brother*. ā was rarely written aa in closed syllables. The reason why ā, ē, ō were not written double in open syllables was doubtless due to the lengthening of early ME. a, e, o in open syllables in the first half of the thirteenth century (§ 78). These new long vowels were always followed by an e in the next syllable, and this e came to be regarded as the sign of a long vowel in the preceding syllable. And then later the e came to be used in words to which it did not etymologically belong for the purpose of indicating a preceding long vowel. Long and short ŭ came to be distinguished by writing the former ou (ow) and the latter u (o). By some later ME. writers an attempt was made to distinguish between long and short ĭ by writing the former y and the latter i. This mode of indicating ī was very common in Chaucer.

§ 12. In late ME. it became fairly common to double consonants after short stem-vowels in order to indicate that the preceding vowel was short, just as is the case in Modern German.

§ 13. The OE. consonant-system was very defective insomuch as each of the letters c, f, g, h, n, s and þ was used to represent two or more sounds, see *EOE. Gr.* § 7. The ambiguity in the use of these consonants was chiefly due to sound-changes which took place during the OE. period

without the corresponding changes in the orthography. Germanic f, þ and s became voiced in OE. between voiced sounds, and Germanic ƀ, ᵹ became unvoiced when they came to stand finally, but no regular change took place in the orthography to indicate the change in pronunciation, see *EOE. Gr.* §§ 139, 172. Again Germanic k, g (which only occurred in the combination ng), χ, ᵹ and ng became differentiated in OE. into gutturals and palatals, but the same letters were kept to indicate both kinds of sounds, see *EOE. Gr.* §§ 166, 168–70. Mainly through the influence of Anglo-Norman orthography many of the above ambiguities were got rid of in ME.

§ 14. c came to be used for the k-sound before guttural vowels and liquids, and k before palatal vowels and n, and from the beginning of the thirteenth century ck beside kk came to be used to express the double k-sound. The letter c was sometimes used for voiceless s initially before palatal vowels, and in AN. words both initially and medially, as citee, receiven. c was also sometimes used to express ts, as blecen, OE. bletsian *to bless*, milce, OE. milts *mercy*. The OE. combination cw was written qu. From about 1150 onwards it became common to write ch for the assibilated OE. palatal c (= tš), and cch (chch) when it was doubled.

§ 15. v was written initially in those ME. dialects where f had become voiced in this position. u later v came to be written medially for OE. voiced f, and v was often written for u initially.

§ 16. In OE. the explosive g and the spirant ᵹ were written alike, but in ME. g came to be used exclusively for the explosive, and ʒ for the spirant, as gōd, glad, beside ʒard, ʒernen, early ME. boʒe = OE. boga *bow*. For initial ʒ- the letters y- and i- were also used, as yaf, iaf = ʒaf, OE. geaf *he gave*. At the end of words ʒ was sometimes used for z (= ts), and in late ME. for voiced s, through confusion

with z, and conversely z for ȝ. Some scribes also used **g**
for ȝ initially. The assibilated OE. palatal **cg** (= dž) came
to be written **gg**, but this was not an improvement, because
OE. did generally distinguish in writing between the guttural
and palatal explosive **gg** by writing the former **gg** and the
latter **cg**, as in **dogga** *dog*, beside licgan *to lie down*. In Fr.
words dž was written **j** (also sometimes **i**) initially and g (**gg**)
medially, as **juge, chargen, plegge.**

§ 17. In order to distinguish between the pronunciation
of the aspirate **h** and the spirant h = χ, the **h** gradually
became used for the aspirate only, and the spirant was
represented by ȝ (also sometimes by c, g), later **gh** (also ch,
especially in the Scottish dialects). This rule had become
fully established by the time of Chaucer, who usually has
gh. And as French scribes did not have the combination
ȝt (**ht**) in their own language they sometimes substituted **st**
for it, as pret. **miste** for miȝte *might*. OE. **hw** came to be
written **qu, qv, quh, qw, qwh** in the northern dialects,
especially the Scottish, and generally **wh** in the other
dialects.

§ 18. s was generally written for both the voiced and the
voiceless s, but **z** was occasionally used for the former,
especially in late ME. **sc** was sometimes written for **ss,** as
blisced *blessed,* and z for ts, as milze, OE. milts *mercy.*

§ 19. The š-sound from OE. sc was generally written
sch in early ME., and later also **ssh, sh,** and in Ken. **ss,**
as **ssrīve, vless.** Double šš was written **schs, ssh,** and
also **shs** (§ 289).

§ 20. OE. þ, ð continued to be written side by side until
well on into the thirteenth century, and then the latter
went out of use. In the fourteenth century **th** gradually
came to be used beside þ, but the þ often continued to be
written beside **th,** especially initially, throughout the ME.
period. In the best manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales*
th is generally used. In the early fourteenth century þ and

y had become so closely alike in form that in some manu-
scripts (e.g. the Cotton MS. of the *Cursor Mundi*, c. 1340)
they were indistinguishable, and in others a dot was some-
times placed over the y in order to distinguish it from the þ.
After 1400 þ fell more and more out of use, and in some
manuscripts was represented only by the y-form in demon-
strative and pronominal words, as yᵉ, yᵗ, yᵐ, yᵘ = *the, that,
them, thou*. Two of these, yᵉ and yᵗ, were retained in printers'
types during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and yᵉ is
still often used pseudo-archaically in shop-signs like Yᵉ Olde
Booke Shoppe. See *N.E.D.* sub y.

§ 21. The OE. rune Ᵽ (= w) continued to be used occa-
sionally until the end of the thirteenth century, but the
ordinary way of writing u-consonant was uu (also vv in
early ME.) and w.

2. PRONUNCIATION

A. The Vowels.

§ 22. ME. had the following simple vowels and diph-
thongs :—

    Short Vowels a, e, i, o, u, ö, ü
    Long   ,,   ā, ę̄, ē, ī, ǭ, ọ̄, ū, ǒ, ǖ
    Diphthongs   ai, ęi, ei, ǫi, ui, au, ęu, ęu, iu, ǫu, ǫu

Note.—With the exception of ę̄ and ǭ the short and long
vowels had the same sound-values as in OE. where ǣ, y̆ = ME. ǒ,
ü̆. ę̄ is used in ME. to represent two slightly different sounds,
viz. a low-front-narrow vowel like OE. ǣ, and a mid-front-wide
vowel which arose in ME. by the lengthening of OE. e in open
syllables, see §§ 52, 78. The sound represented by ǭ did not exist
in OE. For the Kentish rising diphthongs which arose from OE.
ēo, ēa, see §§ 64, 67.

§ 23. The approximate pronunciation of the above vowels
and diphthongs was as follows :—

    a like the a in OE. *assa* and NHG. **gast**, as **asse,
bladder, chapman, passen.**

e like the e in NE. met, as bed, fellen, gest, helpen, slepte.

i like the i in NE. bit, as bidden, children, niȝt *night*, sitten.

o like the o in NHG. Gott and nearly like the o in NE. dog, as dogge, gosling, hors, norþ.

u like the u in NE. full, as dust, ful, sunne (sonne) *sun*, wulf (wolf), see § 48.

ö (gen. written o, ue, and sometimes u) like the ö in NHG. götter, as chorl (churl), horte (huerte, hurte) *heart*, storre *star*, orþe (urþe) *earth*, see § 60.

ü (gen. written u) like the ü in NHG. füllen, as brugge *bridge*, duppen *to dip*, kussen *to kiss*, sunne *sin*, see § 49.

ā like the a in NE. father, as āle, bāken, nāme, rāven.

ę̄ like the ai in NE. air, as lę̄den (OE. lǣdan) *to lead*, lę̄pen (OE. hlēapan) *to leap* ; ę̄ten (OE. etan) *to eat*, mę̄te (OE. mete) *meat*, see §§ 52, 78.

ē̦ like the e in NHG. reh, as dēd *deed*, dēp, hēre, fēt, snēsen.

ī like the i in NE. machine, as bīten, fīnden, līf, tīde.

ǭ like the a in NE. all, as bǭte (OE. bāt) *boat*, cǭld (OE. ceald) *cold* ; cǭle (OE. col) *coal*, þrǭte (OE. þrote) *throat*, see § 51, note.

ǭ like the o in NHG. bote and the eau in Fr. beau, as brǭþer, fǭt, lǭken, sǭne.

ū (gen. written ou, ow), like the ou in Fr. sou, and nearly like the oo in NE. food, as doun, hous, hou (how), pound.

ȫ (gen. written o, ue, eo, and sometimes u) like the ö in NHG. schön, as cheose(n) chuse(n) *to choose*, duep (dup) *deep*, lof (luef, luf) *dear*, see § 65.

ǖ (gen. written u, ui, uy) like the ü in NHG. grün, as fur (fuir) *fire*, huden (huiden) *to hide*, mus (muis) *mice*, see § 57.

ai nearly like the ai in NE. aisle, as dai (day), hail, maiden, saide *he said*.

Early ME. ẹi nearly like the **ay** in NE. **day**, as **clẹi, grẹi, lẹide** *he laid*, **plẹien** *to play*, **wẹi**, see § 107.

Early ME. ẹi with ẹ like the é in Fr. été, as **dẹien** *to die*, **ẹie** *eye*, **flẹien** *to fly*, see § 107, 6.

ǫi like the **oy** in NE. **boy**, as **bǫi (bǫy), chǫis, jǫie, vǫis.**

au nearly like the ˙ou in NE. **out**, as **drawen, faužt** *he fought*, **sauž** *he saw*, **taužte** *he taught.*

ẹu like the n. dial. pronunciation of the **ew** in **few**, as **dẹu (dẹw), fẹwe, hẹweņ, schẹwen.**

Early ME. ẹu with ẹ like the é in Fr. été, as **hẹwe** *hue*, **knẹu (knẹw), nẹwe,** pret. **þrẹu (þrẹw),** see § 112.

Early ME. **iu** (later written **ew**) nearly like the **ew** in NE. **few**, as **sniwen** *to snow*, **spiwen, triwe** *true.*

ǫu with ǫ like the **o** in NE. **not**, as **bǫwe** (OE. **boga**) *bow*, pp. **fǫužten, knǫwen, sǫule, þǫužte.**

Early ME. **ǫu** nearly like the **o** in NE. **no**, as **bǫwes** *branches*, pl. **inǫwe** *enough*, **plǫwes** *ploughs*, see § 114, 2.

ui (= the **u** in NE. **put** + **i**) generally written **oi**, as **enointen** *to anoint*, **point** *point*, see § 207.

B. The Consonants.

§ **24.** The ME. consonant-system was represented by the following letters :—**b, c, d, f, g, ž, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, þ, v (u), w, x, y, z.**

Of the above letters **b, d, f, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v (u), w, x, y** had the same sound-values as in Modern English. The remaining letters require special attention, see §§ 13–20.

c had a threefold pronunciation : 1. Before guttural (back) vowels and liquids it had the **k**-sound, as **cat, cǫld, cuppe**; **clẹne, craft.** 2. Initially and medially before palatal vowels it had the sound of voiceless **s** in Fr. words, as **citee, deceiven.** 3. It was occ. used to represent the combination **ts** (= O.Fr. **ts** from Latin **ce, ci**, which later became **s** in sound), as **blecen** = OE. **bletsian** *to bless*, **milce** = OE. **milts**

mercy. The simple affricata was written ch, and when doubled cch (chch), as chīld, kichene; crucche, wrecche.

g had a twofold pronunciation: 1. Initially it was a voiced explosive (stop), as gāte, glad, gnat, gọd, grẹne. 2. Medially before vowels it had the sound dž (= the affricata j and dg in NE. judge) in Fr. words, as chargen, jugen. The combination ng had the sound ŋg beside ndž according as it represented OE. guttural or palatal ng, as long, singen, þing, beside crengen (cringen), sengen (singen); and similarly with double gg (= OE. guttural gg and palatal cg), as dogge, frogge, stagge, beside brigge, cuggele, seggen *to say,* and also in Fr. words, as plegge *pledge.*

ʒ had a threefold pronunciation: 1. Initially like NE. y in ye, as ʒard, ʒernen, ʒong. 2. In early ME. a voiced guttural or palatal spirant like the g often heard in NE. sagen beside siegen, as bọʒe later bọwe *bow,* draʒen later drawen, beside flẹʒen later fleien *to fly.* 3. Finally and before t it was a voiceless guttural or palatal spirant like the ch in NHG. noch beside ich, as burʒ (burgh), dọuʒ (dọugh), dọuʒter (dọughter), beside hẹʒ (hẹh) *high,* fiʒten (fighten).

Initial h (except in the combination hw· = χw·) was an aspirate like the h in NE. hand, as hand, hous. In other positions it was a voiceless spirant like the ʒ in 3 above, which came to be written for it in early ME.

sch from OE. sc (gen. written sch in early ME., and later also ssh, sh, and in Ken. ss) was like the sh in NE. ship, as schaft, waschen, fisch; ssrīve *to shrive,* vless *flesh.*

þ (th) was used to express both the voiceless and voiced sounds like the th in NE. thin, cloth; father, then, as baþ, þing; brọþer, Ken. þet *that.*

z had the ts sound in early ME., as milze = OE. milts *mercy;* in later ME. it was also used for voiced s, especially in the *Ayenbite,* as zelver *silver,* þouzond.

STRESS (ACCENT).

§ 25. The accentuation in native ME. words was essentially the same as in OE., that is, in all uncompounded words the chief accent fell upon the stem-syllable and always remained there even when suffixes and inflexional endings followed it. In compound words the chief accent fell upon the stem-syllable of the first component part if the second part was a noun or an adjective ; and on the stem-syllable of the second part if this was a verb or derived from a verb.

CHAPTER II

. THE OE. VOWEL-SYSTEM

§ 26. OE. had the following vowel-system :—

Short vowels a, æ, e, i, o, u, y
Long   ,,   ā, ǣ, ē, ī, ō, ū, ȳ
Short diphthongs ea, eo, ie, io
Long   ,,   ēa, ēo, īe, īo

In the next chapter we shall trace the ME. development of the above simple vowels and diphthongs of accented syllables. And in doing so we shall first deal with the independent and then with the dependent changes which they underwent in ME. By independent changes we mean those which took place independently of neighbouring sounds, and by dependent changes those which depended upon or were due to the influence of neighbouring sounds. But before entering upon the subject it will be useful to state here certain dependent changes which took place during the OE. period, as some of them are of special importance for ME.

§ 27. The diphthongs ĕa, ĕo, ĭo became monophthongs during the OE. period before c, g, h, hs, ht ; before a liquid

+c, g, h; and after the initial palatals c-, g-, and sc-. And then the resultant long or short vowels had the same further development in ME. as the corresponding older long or short vowels. See *EOE. Gr.* § 67 and notes.

§ 28. Before h and h + consonant ea became æ (= ME. a, §§ 43, 59) in Anglian, but e in late WS. and also in the eleventh century in Kentish, as sæh *he saw*, fæx *hair*, flæx *flax*, wæxan *to grow*, æhta *eight*, fæht *he fought*, hlæhtor *laughter*, mæht *might*, næht *night*, beside seh, fex, flex, wexan, ehta, feht, hlehtor, meht, neht. A few of these latter forms occur in Chaucer, as flex, wex, wexe(n) beside waxe(n). See §§ 107, 110.

§ 29. After initial palatal c-, g-, sc- ea generally became æ in Anglian (= ME. a), but e in late WS., whence a beside e in ME., as chaf (OE. ceaf) *chaff*, ȝaf *he gave*, ȝat *gate*, schal *shall*, beside chef, ȝef, ȝet, schel.

§ 30. Before ht eo became i in later WS. (rarely y), Ken. and the south Midlands when not followed by a guttural vowel in the next syllable, but became e in the north Midlands and the North (cp. *EOE. Gr.* § 67 and notes 1, 4), whence we have in early ME. riht beside reht (mod. n. dialects reit) *right*, but fehten (OE. feohtan) in all the early ME. dialects. The common form fiȝten was a ME. new formation.

§ 31. io became i in Anglian before c, h + s or t, and before a liquid + c, as birce *birch-tree*, milc *milk*, mixen *dunghill*, gebirhta(n) *to make light*, rihta(n) *to set straight*, see § 62 and *EOE. Gr.* § 67, note 1.

§ 32. The OE. eo, io which occurred after initial palatal sc-, g- were probably never either rising or falling diphthongs. The e, i merely indicated the palatal nature of the preceding sc-, g- as is shown by the ME. forms, and in OE. itself sco- occurs beside sceo-, as schort (OE. scort beside sceort), and similarly ME. bischop, schot *missile*, &c.; ȝon (OE. geon) *yonder*, Orm ȝocc (OE. ġeoc) *yoke*. And in like

manner OE. has scu-, iu- (i = ʒ) beside **sceo-** (**scio-**), **geo-** (**gio-**), as schulen (OE. sculon beside sceolon, scioion) *they shall*, ʒung, ʒong (OE. iung beside geong, giong) *young*.

§ 33. The OE. initial combinations scă-, scŏ- were also often written sceă-, sceŏ- with e merely to denote the palatal pronunciation of the sc-, as sceacan beside scacan (ME. schāken) *to shake*, sceolde beside scolde (ME. schǫlde beside the unstressed form schŏlde) *should*, sceōp beside scōp (ME. schǫp) *he created*.

§ 34. The ēa from older ǣ (= Anglian and Ken. ē) became ē after the initial palatals c-, g-, sc- in some of the late WS. dialects, which like Anglian and Ken. ē remained in ME. (§ 52), as cēp *cheap*, cēs *he chose*, gēfon *they gave*, gēr *year*, gēt *he poured out*, scēp *sheep*, scēt *he shot* = ME. chẹ̄p beside chẹ̄p, ʒẹ̄r, schẹ̄p, &c.

§ 35. Before c, g, h ēa became ē through the intermediate stage ǣ in late Anglian and WS., which remained in early ME., as bēcen (earlier bēacen) *beacon*, ēc *also*, lēc *leek*, bēg *ring*, ēge *eye*, lēg *he told lies*, tēg *rope*, hēh (older hēah) *high*, tēh *he drew*. For the further development of the ē before g, h, see § 107.

§ 36. In Anglian ēo became ē before c, g, h, and h + s or t, and then the ē remained in early ME. like the ē from ēo in other positions, see §§ 65, 107, as rēca(n) *to smoke*, sēc (older sēoc) *sick*, flēga(n) *to fly*, flēge *fly*, þēh *thigh*, wēx *he grew*, lēht which later became līht, liht *a light*.

§ 37. īo became ī in Anglian before palatal c and ht, as cīcen, older *kioken from *kiukīn *chicken*, līhta(n) = WS. līehtan *to give light*.

§ 38. weo- : The OE. initial combination weo-, of what-ever origin, became wu- (rarely wo-) in late WS., and wo- in late Northumbrian, but remained in Mercian and Kentish (= ME. we-), and then the -u-, -o-, -eo- had the same further -development in ME. as old u (§ 48), but generally written o in the combination wur-, o (§ 47), and eo (§ 60). These

three different developments were preserved in these areas in ME., as **wurld,** generally written **world,** and similarly **work, worpen** *to throw,* **worþ, worþen** *to become*; **world, work, worpen, worþ, worþen**; **werld, werk, werpen, werþ, werþen.** And we also have **suster** older **swuster** (OE. **sweostor**), **swurd,** generally written **sword,** beside **soster** older **swoster, sword, swerd.**

§ 39. **wio·** : OE. **io** in the combination **wio·** generally became **wu·** in late WS. and Anglian, but remained in Kentish (= ME. **e, i**). And before gutturals it became **i** in Anglian (*EOE. Gr.* § 63 and note 2). The **wu**-forms generally remained in ME. In ME. we accordingly have **wu·, wi·** and **we·**-forms representing the different areas, as **bitwux, bitwix, bitwex** *between,* **cude** (**code,** o = u), **cwide, cwede** *cud,* **cwuc, cwic, cwec** *alive,* **wuke, wike** (§ 85), **weke** *week,* **wodewe** (o = u), **widewe** (**widwe**) *widow,* **wude** (**wode**) *wood,* see § 85.

CHAPTER III

THE ME. DEVELOPMENT OF THE OE. VOWEL-SYSTEM OF ACCENTED SYLLABLES

1. INDEPENDENT CHANGES

A. The Short Vowels.

§ 40. OE. **æ** became **a,** and **y** was unrounded to **i** during the ME. period in those areas where it had remained in OE. (§ 49), but the vowels **a, e, i, o, u** underwent no independent changes.

a

§ 41. OE. **a** in closed syllables = ME. **a,** as **asse** (OE. **assa**), **cat** (OE. **catte**), **sak** (OE. **sacc**), and similarly **asche, castel, crabbe, fals** *false,* **mattok, palme, stagge, waschen.**

basken (ON. baðask) *to bathe,* casten (ON. kasta), flat (ON. flatr), happe (ON. happ) *good luck.*

§ 42. Before nasals Germanic a became rounded in early OE. to a sound intermediate between the o in NE. on and the a in NHG. mann. In the oldest OE. it was nearly always written a, in the ninth century it was mostly written o, but in late OE. it became pure a again except in some parts of Mercia (west Midlands) where it became full o, and has remained as such in many of the dialects in this area down to the present day. Examples in closed syllables before a single or double nasal, and a nasal + a voiceless consonant are : man, mon; þank, þonk ; and similarly anker, bank, bigan, camp, can, pret. drank, hamme *ham*, plante, ram, ran, swam, swan, pret. wan, wanten. ransaken (ON. rannsaka). For OE. a(o) before a nasal + a voiced stop see §§ 72–4.

NOTE.— þenne, þen *then*, whenne, when *when*, beside þanne, þan, whanne, whan were the unstressed forms. The preterites cam *he came*, nam *he took* beside cǭm (OE. c(w)ōm), nǭm (OE. nōm) were ME. new formations.

<p style="text-align:center">æ</p>

§ 43. æ had become a sound lying between e and æ (generally written e) during the OE. period in Kent and the districts bordering on it, and also in the sw. Midlands, as feder *father*, gled, smel, þet, wes, weschen *to wash*. From about 1300 the e was supplanted by a in the sw. Midlands, and also in Kent and the districts bordering on it from about 1400. This change of e to a was to some extent not a sound-change, but merely a letter-change imported from those parts of the country which regularly had a from older æ, as is evidenced by the preservation of the e-sound in some of the dialects, especially the Kentish, down to the present day. In all the other parts of the country OE. æ, of whatever origin, became a in the early part of the twelfth century,

although the æ often continued to be written until a much later date, e. g. in the Proclamation of London (1258). Examples in closed syllables are: **appel** (OE. **æppel, æpl**), **baþ** (OE. **bæþ**), **craft** (OE. **cræft**), **þat** (OE. **þæt**), and similarly **after, at, ax** *axe*, **bak, blak, fasten, fat** *vat*, **glad, glas, gnat, gras**, pret. **hadde (hafde)** pp. **had, harvest, hat, paþ, sad, smal, staf, what**, pret. **bad** (OE. **bæd**), and similarly **bar, brak, brast, sat, spak, was**. For OE. æ in open syllables see § 79, 3.

NOTE.—1. ME. **whether** (OE. **hwæþer**) is the unstressed form which became generalized. **hedde** (OE. **hæfde**) *had*, **wes** (OE. **wæs**) *was* beside **hadde, was** were the unstressed forms. South Midland pret. sing. forms like **breek, seet, speek** were new formations with the long vowel of the plural levelled out into the singular. The northern form **quās (quhās)**, and the Midland and southern **whǭs whǭs** (OE. **hwæs**) were new formations from the nom. **quā (quhā), whǭ whǭ** (OE. **hwā**) *who*. Northern forms like **efter, gres, seck (sekk)** beside **after, gras, sak** *sack* were ON. loan-words, and they are still in common use in the modern dialects of this area, see Index to *ED. Gr.*

2. Forms like west Midland **elder, fellen** beside **alder, fallen** had **e** beside **æ** also in OE., see *EOE. Gr.* § 57 note 1.

e

§ 44. OE. **e** in closed syllables = ME. **e**, as **bèd** (OE. **bedd**), **better** (OE. **bet(e)ra, bettra**), **helpen** (OE. **helpan**), and similarly **benche, bersten** *to burst*, **beste, delven, fresch, helle** *hell*, **helm, henne, melten, men, nest, net, quenchen, sellen, senden, steppen, swelten** *to die*, **tellen, þreschen, wegge** *wedge*, **west, egg** (ON. **egg**), **legge** (ON. **leggr**) *leg*. For OE. **e** before **ld, nd, ng**, see §§ 71, 73, 74.

NOTE.—In some parts of the se. Midlands early OE. **æ** (= the i-umlaut of a(o) before nasals, *EOE. Gr.* § 57) remained until the early part of the twelfth century, and then became **a** at the same time as ordinary OE. **æ** (§ 43), as **ande** *end*, **man** *men*, **panewes**

panes pans *pennies, pence,* sanden *to send,* &c., but these and similar a-forms were ousted by the e-forms of the neighbouring dialects during the latter half of the fourteenth century.

i

§ 45. OE. i = ME. i in closed and generally also in open syllables (see § 85), and was often written y before and after nasals, u (= v), w, and finally, as bidden (OE. biddan) *to pray, bid,* cribbe (OE. cribb), grim (OE. grimm), milken (OE. milcian), sinken (OE. sincan), þing (OE. þing), and similarly biginnen, bil *axe,* bitter, brid *bird,* bringen, chin, crisp, disch, drinken, finger, fisch, flicche *flitch,* his, is, lid, lippe, middel, ribbe, ring, schilling, schip, schrinken, sitten, spinnen, springen, stingen, stinken, swimmen, twig, þis, þridde *third,* winter; hider *hither,* liver, sive *sieve,* þider *thither,* witen *to know*; pret. pl. and pp. of strong verbs belonging to class I (§ 396), as biten (OE. biton, biten), and similarly biden, driven, gliden, riden, risen, schinen, writen. hitten (ON. hitta) *to hit,* ill (ON. illr), skil (ON. skil), skin (ON. skinn). For OE. i before ld, mb, nd, see §§ 71–3.

§ 46. Late OE. i, of whatever origin, + ht remained throughout the ME. period in the northern and north Midland dialects, but in the south Midland and southern dialects it became lengthened to ī with gradual loss of the spirantal element from about the end of the fourteenth century, as niht, niȝt, night, nīght (early OE. neaht later niht), and similarly miȝt sb., miȝti adj., pret. miȝte; kniȝt (early OE. cneoht later cniht) *boy,* and similarly riȝt; siȝt (early WS. gesiehþ later gesihþ, -siht) *sight*; diȝten (OE. dihtan from Lat. dictāre) *to set in order,* and similarly pliȝt, wiȝt *thing, creature,* &c.

o

§ 47. OE. o in closed syllables = ME. o, as borwen (OE. borgian) *to borrow,* pp. holpen (OE. holpen), þorn (OE.

þorn), and similarly pp. borsten (brosten) *burst*, box, broþ, colt, corn, flok, folk, folwen *to follow*, forke, fox, frogge, frost, god, hoppen, horn, hors, knotte *knot*, lok, morwe (morwen, morȝen) *morning, morrow*, norþ, ofte, orchard, oxe, port *harbour*, sorwe (sorȝe) *sorrow*, stork, storm, top.

u

§ 48. OE. u = ME. u in closed and generally also in open syllables (see § 85). From about the middle of the thirteenth century o came to be written for u before and after nasals, u (= v), and w. The writing of o for u in these positions became pretty general towards the end of the century. In late ME. o was also generally written for u when followed by a single consonant + vowel (§ 9). This use of o for u is later than that of u for y = ü (§ 49), but earlier than the writing of ou for ū (§ 56). Examples are: bukke (OE. bucca), ful (OE. full), hunger honger (OE. hungor), and similarly butter, clubbe (ON. klubba), cursen, ȝung ȝong *young*, huntere hontere, plukken, pullen, sum som *some*, sunne sonne *sun*, tunge tonge *tongue*, wulf wolf, wulle wolle *wool*, pret. pl. and pp. of strong verbs belonging to Class III (§§ 403–4), as runnen ronnen (OE. runnon, runnen), and similarly bigunnen bigonnen, drunken dronken, sungen songen, wunnen wonnen; cumen comen (OE. cuman) *to come*, dure dore (OE. duru) *door*, and similarly huni honi *honey*, luve love, nute note, sumer somer, sune sone *son*.

y

§ 49. OE. y appears in ME. partly as i, partly as e, and partly as ü (written u from about 1100 onwards).

1. It became unrounded to i in late OE. or early ME. in all the northern counties, in a great part of the east Midland counties, including Lincolnshire, Norfolk, and the districts bordering on these counties, as well as in parts of the south-

western counties, especially Devonshire, Dorsetshire, and Wiltshire.

2. It became **e** in Kent and parts of Middlesex, Sussex. Essex, and Suffolk during the OE. period, and remained as such in ME. and also in many of the modern dialects of this area, see *ED. Gr.* § 109. In Chaucer the forms with **e** are nearly as numerous as those with **i**. A few of the **e**-forms have crept into standard NE., as **fledged** (mod. n. dialects **fligd**), **kernel, knell, left** adj.

3. In all other parts of the country, including the west Midlands, it remained and was written **u** until about the end of the fourteenth century and then became unrounded to **i**; see, however, § **125**. The London dialect also belonged to the **ü**-area in early ME. as is evidenced by the **ü**-forms in the Proclamation of London (1258). The writing of **u** for **y** is earlier than that of **o** for **u** (§ **9**), both of which are due to the influence of Anglo-French orthography.

Examples are: **brigge bregge brugge** (OE. **brycg**) *bridge*, **dippen deppen duppen** (OE. **dyppan**) *to dip*, **kin (kyn) ken kun** (OE. **cynn**) *race, generation*, **kissen kessen kussen** (OE. **cyssan**) *to kiss*, **sinne (synne) senne (zenne) sunne** (OE. **synn**) *sin*, and similarly **birþe, chirche, cripel, dine** *din*, **dint, disi** *foolish*, **fillen, fixene** *vixen*, **first, hil, hippe, hirdel, kichene, king, kirnel, listen** *to please*, **listen** *to listen*, **lift** *left*, **mille, pit, rigge** *ridge*, **schitten** *to shut*, **sister** (ON. **syster**). **stiren, þinken** *to seem*, **þinne (þynne)**, **winne (wynne)** *joy*. For the writing of **y** for **i** see § **45**. For OE. **y** before **nd** see § **73**.

B. The Long Vowels.

§ 50. During the ME. period OE. **ā** became **ǭ** in the dialects south of the Humber, **ō** became **ü** in the dialects north of the Humber, and **ȳ** was unrounded to **ī** in those areas where it had remained in OE. (§ **57**), but the vowels

æ, ē, ī, and ū underwent no independent changes. In the course of the fifteenth century, however, the vowels ī, ū (south of the Humber) began to undergo diphthongization, and ē, ō (south of the Humber) had become ī, ū in sound before the end of the century, see *ENE. Gr.* §§ 71, 73, 75, 77.

ā

§ 51. OE. ā had become long open ǭ in all the dialects south of the Humber by about the year 1225. The change of ā to ǭ did not take place throughout this large area at one and the same time. In some dialects, especially the southern, it undoubtedly took place in the latter half of the twelfth century and in others later, e. g. it had not taken place in the east Midland dialect of Orm at the time he wrote the *Ormulum* (about 1200). But it must have taken place before the influx of early French loan-words like dāme, fāble, rāge (§ 195), and before the lengthening of early ME. ă in open syllables, as nāme, māken, &c. (§ 79), otherwise these two types of words would also have been included in the change of ā to ǭ. The ǭ was sometimes written oa (ao) and from the fourteenth century onwards it was very often written oo in closed syllables and when final. In the dialects north of the Humber the ā remained until about the end of the thirteenth century, when it became long open ę̄, although the ā was mostly retained in writing, and from the time of Barbour (1375) it was often written ai, ay (cp. § 121). Throughout this large area OE. ā, the long ā in early French loan-words, and early ME. ă in open syllables all fell together in ę̄. This great characteristic difference between the ME. development of OE. ā in the dialects north and south of the Humber has been preserved in the modern dialects right down to the present day. On the other hand the modern dialects north of the Humber still preserve the distinction in development between OE. ā and early ME. ŏ in open syllables (§ 81), whereas in the other dialects they

have generally fallen together just as in the standard language. Examples are : bǫn bǫǫn bān (OE. bān) *bone*, bǫt bǫǫt bāt (OE. bāt) *boat*, grǫpen grāpe (OE. grāpian) *to grope*, mǫre māre (OE. māra) *more*, tǫ tǫǫ tā (OE. tā) *toe*, and similarly bǫr, bǫþe *both*, brǫd, clǫþ, fǫm *foam*, gǫn *to go*, gǫst *ghost*, gǫt, hǫl *whole*, hǫm, hǫt, lǫf, nǫn *none*, ǫn *one*, ǫte *oats*, ǫþ, rǫd, rǫp *rope*, sǫr, strǫken, tǫde *toad*, þǫs *those*, wǫ *woe*, wǫt *I know*; the pret. sing. of strong verbs belonging to class I (§ 396), as arǫs, bǫd, bǫt, drǫf, schǫn, slǫd, smǫt, strǫd, wrǫt.

NOTE.—The ǫ from OE. ā was probably a low-back-narrow-round vowel like the a in NE. all, whereas the ME. ǫ which arose from OE. ŏ in open syllables was probably a mid-back-wide-round vowel (§ 81). .Although the two sounds have fallen together in the NE. standard language they are still kept apart in some of the north Midland dialects, the former having become uə (ɔə) and the latter ǫi, as uəm ɔəm (OE. hām) *home*, but þrǫit (OE. þrote) *throat*.

<center>ǣ</center>

§ 52. In dealing with the history of OE. ǣ in ME. it is necessary to distinguish between ǣ = Germanic ǣ and the ǣ = the i-umlaut of ā.

1. Germanic ǣ had become long close ē in the non-WS. dialects in early OE., but by the end of the OE. period the ǣ had spread again to Middlesex, Essex, parts of the south Midland counties, and parts of East Anglia. From these latter areas words containing this ǣ-sound gradually crept into most of the other areas during the ME. period as is evidenced by the modern dialects.

2. ǣ = the i-umlaut of ā became long close ē in Kentish during the OE. period, and remained as such throughout the ME. period. In all the other dialects the ǣ-sound (= ę̄) generally remained in ME. until near the end of the fifteenth century when it became ę̄, see § 63 note.

In consequence of the spreading of ǣ in 1, Chaucer some-
times has ę̄ beside ē, as dę̄d beside dēd *deed*, generally
rę̄den, wę̄re(n) beside drę̄de *dread*, slę̄pen; and probably
through the influence of Kentish ę̄ in 2 he occasionally has
ę̄ beside ē, as clę̄ne, lę̄den, lę̄ren *to teach*, beside clę̄ne,
lę̄den, lę̄ren.

In those areas where the ǣ-sound in 1 and 2 had remained
throughout the OE. period the ǣ was preserved in writing
until about the end of the twelfth century, and occasionally
even later, as in the Proclamation of London (1258). In the
Ormulum (about 1200) it was also used to express Germanic
ǣ as well, although this ǣ had become ę̄ in Orm's dialect
hundreds of years before his time. This was due to Orm
having adopted the classical WS. system of orthography.
Through the influence of Anglo-Norman orthography the ǣ
was generally supplanted by ę̄ from about the end of the
twelfth century, and from the fourteenth century onwards
it was very often written ee in closed syllables and when
final. After OE. ēa had been monophthongized to ǣ (§ 63)
the ēa came to be written sometimes for old ǣ in the twelfth
and early thirteenth centuries, and occasionally also in the
fourteenth century. This change of ǣ to ē (ee), generally
written ę̄ (ę̄ę̄) in grammars, was not a sound-change, but
merely an orthographical change. The sound itself, viz.
a low-front-narrow vowel like the ai in NE. air, remained
in ME.

In those areas where the long close ę̄ had remained at the
end of the OE. period, it also remained in ME. and was
written e. From the fourteenth century onwards it was
very often written ee in closed syllables and when final. In
grammars it is generally written ę̄ (ę̄ę̄).

Examples of 1 are: dēd (Angl. and Ken. dēd) dę̄d (WS. dǣd)
deed, slēpen (Angl. and Ken. slēpan) slę̄pen (WS. slǣpan)
to sleep, and similarly bę̄re *bier,* ę̄l, ę̄ven *evening,* hę̄r *hair,*
hę̄ring, lę̄ten, mę̄de *meadow,* mę̄l *meal, repast,* nę̄dle, rę̄den,

sēd, spēche, strēte, þēre *there*, þrēd, wēpen, whēre,
wēte *wet* ; pret. pl. of strong verbs belonging to classes IV
(§ 407) and V (§ 408), as bēren, ēten, sēten, wēren, &c.
mēden (WS. mǣden) *maiden*, pret. sēde (WS. sǣde) *he
said*.

Examples of 2 are: dēlen (Angl. and WS. dǣlan) dēlen
(Ken. dēlan) *to divide*, clēne (Angl. and WS. clǣne) clēne
(Ken. clēne), and similarly blēchen, brēde *breadth*, ēni *any*,
ēvre *ever*, hēlen, hēte, hēþ, lēden, lēne *lean*, lēnen *to lend*,
lēren *to teach*, lēven, rēchen, rēren *to rear*, sē *sea*, sprēden,
swēten, tēchen, whēte.

NOTE.—1. The ē = OE. ǣ was a low-front-narrow vowel like the
ai in NE. air, whereas the ME. ē which arose from OE. ĕ in open
syllables was probably a mid-front-wide vowel (§ 80). Although
the two sounds have fallen together in standard NE. they are still
kept apart in many of the north Midland dialects, the former
having become iə and the latter ei, as liəd (OE. lǣdan) *to lead*,
but eit (OE. etan) *to eat*.

2. In parts of the se. Midlands (Middlesex, Essex, Herts., &c.)
it became usual to write ā for ē (= Germanic ǣ and the i-umlaut
of OE. ā, as dād, lāten; lāden, tāchen) from about 1100· until
well on into the thirteenth century, and then the ā was gradually
ousted by ē. The writing of ā for old ǣ in these parts was only a
letter-change. The ǣ could not have become ā in sound, other-
wise it would have fallen altogether with old ā; and furthermore
the modern dialects in these parts have no trace of ME. ā for ǣ,
but see, however, LUICK, *Hist. Gr.*, pp. 345–6.

ē

§ 53. OE. long close ē, of whatever origin, = ME. long
close ē (cp. § 50). From the fourteenth century onwards it
was very often written ee in closed syllables and when final,
and in later ME. it was often written ie through the influence
of French orthography. Examples are: 1. Germanic ē, as hēr
hēre (OE. hēr) *here*, mēde (OE. mēd) *meed, reward*. 2. The
pret. of strong verbs belonging to class VII (§ 414), as lēt

(OE. lēt) *he let*, and similarly hḙt *he was called*, slḙp *he slept*.
8. The i-umlaut of OE. ō, as dḙmen (OE. dēman) *to judge*,
fḙt (OE. fēt) *feet*, and similarly bḙche, blḙden, fḙden, fḙlen,
gḙs, grḙne, grḙten, hḙden, kḙne *keen*, kḙpen, mḙten,
quḙne, sḙken (sḙchen), sḙmen, spḙde *success*, swḙte, tḙþ,
wḙpen *to weep*.   4. In Latin loan-words, as bḙte (OE. bēte,
Lat. bēta) *beetroot*, crḙde (OE. crēda *creed*, Lat. crēdō *I
believe*).   5. OE. lengthened ē in monosyllables, as hḙ *he*, mḙ
me, þḙ *thee*, wḙ *we*.   For forms like bḙken *beacon*, ḙk *also*,
lḙk *leek*, see § 35.

<p style="text-align:center">ī</p>

§ 54. OE. ī = ME. ī (cp. § 50) which was very often written
y before and after nasals, u (= v) and w (§ 9), and in Chaucer
y is also very common in other combinations, as fīf fīve (OE.
fīf) *five*, sīde (OE. sīde) *side*, tīme tȳme (OE. tīma) *time*, þīn
þȳn (OE. þīn) *thine*, wīs wȳs (OE. wīs) *wise*, and similarly
blīþe, īren, īs *ice*, īvi, knīf (ON. knīfr), līf, līken *to please*,
līm, mīle, pīpe, swīn, tīde, whīle, whīt, wīf, wīn; in the
present of strong verbs belonging to class I (§ 396), as bīten
(OE. bītan) *to bite*, and similarly bīden, chīden, drīven,
glīden, rīden, schīnen, smīten, strīden, þrīven, wrīten.

§ 55. In the dialects south of the Humber OE. long close
ō = ME. long close ǫ (cp. § 50), also very often written oo
in closed syllables and when final from the fourteenth century
onwards.   In the dialects north of the Humber the ǫ became
ü through the intermediate stage ö about 1300, and was
generally written u through the influence of Anglo-Norman
orthography, and sometimes o, later also ui, oi (cp. § 121),
but it was not written o before nasals, u (= v), after w, and
when final.   Many of the northern dialects, especially the
Scottish, have preserved the ü- or ö-sound down to the present
day.   Examples are: bǫk bŭk later buik (OE. bōc) *book*,
gǫs gŭs later guis (OE. gōs) *goose*, lǫken lüke(n) later

luike(n) (OE. lōcian) *to look*, and similarly blọ̄d, brọ̄d, brọ̄k, brọ̄m, brọ̄þer, cọ̄k, cọ̄l, dọ̄m, dọ̄n (dọ̄), flọ̄d, fọ̄de, fọ̄t, gọ̄d, họ̄d, họ̄k, mọ̄der, mọ̄ne *moon*, mọ̄neþ, nọ̄n, ọ̄þer, pọ̄l rọ̄f, rọ̄k, rọ̄te, schọ̄, sọ̄ne, sọ̄t, spọ̄n, stọ̄l, tọ̄l, tọ̄þ; the pret. of strong verbs belonging to class VI (§ 411), as awọ̄k, forsọ̄k, schọ̄k, schọ̄p *he created*, stọ̄d, swọ̄r, tọ̄k. Pret. sing. cọ̄m (OE. c(w)ōm), nōm (OE. nōm) *he took*, beside the ME. new formations **cam com, nam nom**.

ū

§ 56. OE. ū = ME. ū. Through the influence of Anglo-Norman orthography it was often written **ou (ow)** from the second half of the thirteenth century and became general in the fourteenth. By the time of Chaucer it was generally written **ow** when final and frequently also in open syllables, especially before l, n, and v, but in other positions it was mostly written **ou** (§ 9). Examples are : brū brow (OE. brū) *brow*, dūn doun down (OE. dūn) *down*, hūs hous (OE. hūs) *house*, mūþ mouþ (OE. mūþ) *mouth*, and similarly **abouten** *about*, broun, cloud, clout, cou (cow), croume *crumb*, douke *duck*, douve *dove*, foul, goune, hou (how), loud, louken *to close*, lous, mous, nou (now), oule (owle), our, out, ploume *plum*, proud, rouȝ *rough*, roum, schour, schroud, scoulen (ON. skūla), souken *to suck*, souþ, toun, þou (þow), þoume (þoumbe) *thumb*, þousend.

ȳ

§ 57. The development of OE. ȳ in ME. went parallel with that of short y (§ 49), viz. it appears in ME. partly as ī, partly as ẹ̄, and partly as ū (written u, ui, rarely uy from about 1100 onwards, see § 9).

1. It became unrounded to ī in late OE. or early ME. in all the northern counties, in a great part of the east Midland counties, including Lincolnshire, Norfolk, and the districts bordering on these counties, as well as in parts of the south-

western counties, especially Devonshire, Dorsetshire, and Wiltshire.

2. It became ę̄ in Kent and parts of Middlesex, Sussex, Essex, and Suffolk during the OE. period, and remained as such in ME. In the modern dialects of this area the ę̄ has become ī, as mīs = ME. mę̄s *mice*.

3. In all other parts of the country including the west Midlands, it remained and was written u, ui (rarely uy), until about the end of the fourteenth century and then became unrounded to ī.

Examples are: brīde brę̄de brūde (OE. brȳd) *bride*, fīr fę̄r (vę̄r) fūr (OE. fȳr) *fire*, hīden hę̄den hūden (OE. hȳdan) *to hide*, and similarly hīde, hīre, hīve, līs, mīs, prīde, whī *why* ; līþen (ON. hlȳða) *to listen*, mīre (ON. mȳrr) *mire*, skie (ON. skȳ *cloud*) *sky*.

C. The Diphthongs.

§ 58. All the diphthongs ĕa, ĕo, ĭo became monophthongs in late OE. except in Kentish, although they mostly continued to be written long after this sound-change had taken place. ĭe, which only occurred in the WS. area, had become monophthongized to ў̆, ĭ by the time of Alfred, although the ĭe mostly continued to be written until a very much later date.

1. *The Short Diphthongs.*

ea

§ 59. OE. ea, of whatever origin, became æ in the early part of the eleventh century, although the old spelling with ea was often preserved in writing until a much later date. This æ fell together with old æ and along with it became a in the early part of the twelfth century (§ 43). Examples are: all (OE. eall) *all*, fallen (OE. feallan) *to fall*, barn (OE. bearn) *child*, and similarly calf (see § 284), callen, chalk, half, halle *hall*, pret. halp *he helped*, malt, salt,

scharp, swal(e)we *swallow*, wall ; arm, dar(r) *I dare*, ȝard,
hard, harm, sparke, sparwe *sparrow*, sward, swarm,
warm ; chaf, ȝaf *he gave*, ȝat *gate*, schadwe *shadow*, schaft,
schal.

eo

§ eo. eo, of whatever origin, became ŏ in late OE. in all
the dialects, although the eo was often preserved in writing
until well on into the ME. period.   The ŏ then became un-
rounded to e during the twelfth century in the northern,
east Midland, and south Midland dialects, but remained in
the west Midland and southern dialects (except Kentish)
until about the end of the fourteenth century, when it also
became unrounded to e.   In these latter dialects the ŏ-sound
was written eo and later through the influence of Anglo-
Norman orthography o, ue and sometimes u.   Examples
are : herte, heorte horte huerte hurte (OE. heorte) *heart* ;
erþe, eorþe urþe (OE. eorþe) *earth*, and similarly berken
to bark, cherl *churl*, derk, erl *Earl*, ernest, ferre *far*,
kerven *to carve*, self (for silf, sülf see *EOE. Gr.* § 311),
smerten, sterre *star*, sterven *to die*, ȝel(o)we *yellow*, hert
hart, heven(e), seven(e), werk *work*.

ie

§ 61. WS. ie, of whatever origin, was monophthongized
to y, i by the time of Alfred, although it generally continued
to be written until a very much later date, cp. § 49 and
EOE. Gr. § 67.   The chief sources of the ie were : 1. The
i-umlaut of ea after initial palatal c-, g-, sc- ; 2. the i-umlaut
of ea which arose from breaking ; 3. the i-umlaut of io ; and
4. Germanic e after initial palatal c-, g-, sc-.   For 1, 2, and
4 the other dialects regularly had e in OE. and ME., but for
2 the west Midland had a (before 1 + cons.) in early ME.
which was later supplanted by the e of the other dialects, and
for 3 they had io (eo) in OE. and i (e) in ME., see § 62.   In
ME. the y had the same further development as old y (§ 49).

Examples are: chüle chile, chele *cold, coldness*; güst gist, gest *guest*; schüppen schippen, scheppen *to create*; chürren chirren, cherren *to turn*; dürne, derne *dark, hidden*; üldre, eldre, aldre *elder*; füllen, fellen, fallen *to fell*; süllen sillen (WS. siellan, syllan, sellan), sellen *to sell*; ʒürnen ʒirnen, ʒernen *to desire*; hürde hirde, herde *shepherd*; ürre irre, erre *anger*; bigüten bigiten, bigeten *to beget*; ʒüllen, ʒellen *to yell*.

io

§ **62. io,** of whatever origin, had become **eo** during the OE. period except in Northumbrian and a part of n. Mercian where the **io** remained. In ME. the **eo** had the same development as old **eo** (§ 60), and the **io** became **i**, as melk, milk (OE. miol(u)c, meol(u)c) *milk*, and similarly selk, silk, selver, silver; hirde (Nth. hiorde) *shepherd*, and similarly irre *anger*.

2. *The Long Diphthongs.*

ēa

§ **63. ēa,** of whatever origin, became **ǣ** in Anglian and WS. in the early part of the eleventh century, and thus fell together with old **ǣ** = the i-umlaut of **ā** (see § 52 and note 1). although the **ēa** was often preserved in writing until well on into the ME. period. Through the influence of Anglo-Norman orthography the **ǣ** was generally supplanted by **ę̄** from about the end of the twelfth century, and from the fourteenth century onwards it was very often written ee in closed syllables and when final. This change of **ǣ** to **ę̄** (ęę), generally written **ę̄** (ęę) in grammars, was not a sound-change, but merely an orthographical change. The sound itself, viz. a low-front-narrow vowel like the ai in NE. air, remained in ME. until near the end of the fifteenth century when it became **ę̄**, see note. In Kentish ēa became a rising diphthong in the second half of the twelfth century, which was generally written ea, ia, ya, yea, and in the fourteenth

century e, rarely ye, which seems to indicate that by this time it had become long ē. Examples are : dẹ̄d, dead dyad dyead (OE. dēad) *dead* ; lẹ̄pen, leapen lyapen lyeapen (OE. hlēapan) *to leap*, and similarly bẹ̄m, bẹ̄ne *bean*, bẹ̄ten, brẹ̄d, chẹ̄pe *cheap*, dẹ̄f, dẹ̄þ, drẹ̄m, ẹ̄re *car*, ẹ̄st, flẹ̄ *flea*, grẹ̄t, hẹ̄p, hẹ̄ved (hẹ̄d) *head*, lẹ̄f, rẹ̄d *red*, slẹ̄n *to slay*, stẹ̄m, stẹ̄p, strẹ̄m ; pret. chẹ̄s *he chose*.

Note.—In both native words (cp. §§ 52. 2, 80) and Fr. loan-words (cp. §§ 196, 205. 3, 217, 223) the ẹ̄, of whatever origin, became ẹ̄ towards the end of the fifteenth century, that is, soon after old ẹ̄ had become ī (§ 50), see *ENE. Gr.* § 72.

§ 64. The non-WS. dialects had ẹ̄ for early WS. ēa (= Germanic ǣ, § 52) after initial palatal c-, g-, sc-, which remained in ME., as chẹ̄ke *check*, ʒẹ̄r *year*, ʒẹ̄ven *they gave*, schẹ̄p *sheep*, cp. § 34.

<div align="center">ēo</div>

§ 65. ēo, of whatever origin, became ö in Anglian and WS. in late OE., although the ēo was often preserved in writing until well on into the ME. period. The ö then became unrounded to close ẹ̄ during the twelfth century in the northern, east Midland, and south Midland dialects, but remained in the west Midland and southern dialects (except Kentish, see § 67) until about the end of the fourteenth century, when it also became unrounded to ẹ̄. In these latter dialects the ö-sound was written eo and later through the influence of Anglo-Norman orthography o, ue and some-times u, w, we, cp. § 112. The ẹ̄ was very often written ee in closed syllables and when final, and in later ME. also often ie (§ 9). Examples are : dẹ̄p diep, deop duep dup (OE. dēop) *deep* ; þẹ̄f þief, þeof þuef þuf (OE. þēof) *thief*, and similarly bẹ̄ *a bee*, bẹ̄den *to bid*, bẹ̄n *to be*, clẹ̄ven *to cleave*, crẹ̄pen, dẹ̄r *deer*, fẹ̄nd *fiend*, flẹ̄n *to flee*, flẹ̄s *fleece*, frẹ̄nd *friend*, frẹ̄sen, knẹ̄, lẹ̄f *dear*, lẹ̄sen *to lose*, rẹ̄d *reed*, rẹ̄ken *to smoke*, schẹ̄ten *to shoot*, sẹ̄ke beside sike *sick* (§ 99), sẹ̄n *to see*,

<div align="center">D</div>

sē̆þen, snē̆sen, wē̆de *weed*; the pret. of strong verbs belonging to class VII (§ 414), as bē̆t *he beat*, hē̆ld *he held*, lē̆p beside lepte *he leapt*, wē̆p beside wepte *he wept*.

NOTE.—In some words the e͛o became a rising diphthong eó which in ME. became ō by absorption of the first element. This often gave rise to double forms, as chōsen, schōten beside chē̆sen, schēten; ʒōde beside ʒē̆de (OE. ge-eóde beside ge-éode) *he went*.

ie

§ 66. WS. īe, of whatever origin, was monophthongized to ȳ, ī (cp. § 9 and *EOE. Gr.* § 67) by the time of Alfred, although it generally continued to be written until a very much later date. The chief sources of the īe were : 1. The i-umlaut of īo = īo (ēo) in the other dialects (cp. § 67) ; and 2. the i-umlaut of ēa = ē̆ in the other OE. and ME. dialects. In ME. the ȳ had the same further development as old ȳ (§ 57). Examples are : dē̆re, dūre dīre (OE. dīore, dēore, dīere) *dear*, hē̆ren, hūren huiren (§ 9) hīren (OE. hēran, hīeran) *to hear*, and similarly alē̆sen *to deliver*, bē̆ʒen later beien (cp. § 107, 6) *to bend*, bilē̆ven *to believe*, chē̆se, ē̆ken *to increase*, nē̆de, slē̆ve, stē̆le *steel*, stē̆pel.

io

§ 67. Old īo had become ēo in all the dialects except the Kentish before the end of the OE. period, and then had the same further development in these dialects as old ēo (§ 65). On the other hand old ēo had become īo (also written īa) in Kentish by the end of the OE. period, and then had the same further development as old īo. The īo became īe in early ME. Then it became a rising diphthong medially, written ie, ye and sometimes i, e, which became ē̆ in the fourteenth century, but remained finally and then later became ī also written ȳ. Examples are: diep dyep (OE. dēop) *deep*, diere dyere (OE. dīore, dēore, ̄ WS. dīere) *dear*, and similarly liese lyese *to lose*, lyeve lē̆ve *dear*, viend vyend

fiend, but bī bȳ (OE. bīon, bēon) *to be*, vlȳ (OE. flēon) *to flee*, vrī vrȳ (OE. frīo, frēo) *free*, zī zȳ *to see*. See LUICK, *Hist. Gr.*, p. 338.

2. DEPENDENT CHANGES

(1) THE LENGTHENING OF SHORT VOWELS BEFORE CONSONANT COMBINATIONS.

§ 68. From our knowledge of ME. phonology it is clear that short vowels and short diphthongs must have been lengthened some time during the OE. period before certain consonant combinations, especially before a liquid or a nasal + a homorganic voiced consonant, that is, before ld, rd, nd, mb, ng, rl, ·rn, and probably also before rþ, rs + vowel. This lengthening of short vowels and short diphthongs took place some time before the end of the ninth century. But the lengthening did not take place when the consonant combination was immediately followed by another consonant, as pl. lambru : lāmb *lamb*, comp. lengra : lāng *long*, heardra : hēard *hard*, pret. sende from *sendde : inf. sēndan *to send*, pl. cildru : cīld *child*, hundred : hūnd *hundred*, pl. sculdru : scūldor *shoulder*, wundru : wūndor *wonder*, &c.; nor in unstressed forms, as sceolde *should*, under, wolde *would*.

§ 69. In the transition period from OE. to ME., in early ME., and during the ME. period the long vowels were shortened again before some of the combinations, especially before rd, rl, rn, rþ, and rs, so that the combinations with which we are specially concerned are only ld, mb, nd, and ng. And even before these latter combinations shortening began to take place before mb, nd, and ng in the course of the late twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries.

§ 70. From what is said below it will be seen that whether the long vowels were preserved or became shortened again depended partly upon the nature of the following consonant

combination, partly upon the nature of the vowel, and partly upon difference of dialect. The lengthening before ld was generally preserved in all the dialects. Shortening had taken place before nd, ng, and rd (see below) in Orm's dialect before he wrote the *Ormulum*, as senndenn *to send*, brinngenn *to bring*, harrd *hard*. For OE. a(o) before nasals (§ 42) Chaucer has o before nd, ng, but ǫ before mb, as hond, lond, stondon, but cǫmb, pret. clǫmb *he climbed*, lǫmb, wǫmb. In his dialect long ẹ̄ (= OE. īo (ēo), ē) remained before nd and ng, as fẹ̄nd *fiend*, hẹ̄ng *he hung*, and also ī before mb, nd, as clīmben, fīnden, but i before ng, as bringen ; ū remained before nd, as ground, but was shortened before mb, ng, as pp. clomben (o = u, § 9) *climbed*, songen *sung* ; a was short before rd, as hard, warde, but OE. lengthened ō remained long, as bǫrd *board*, hǫrd *hoard*, and similarly in Orm's dialect. For ẹ̄ (= early OE. ea, later ēa) before rd he has ẹ̄, as bẹ̄rd *beard*, yẹ̄rd *yard*, and similarly before rn, as bẹ̄rn *child*, fẹ̄rn *fern*, but for OE. ē he has e, as pret. herde (OE. hērde) *he heard*, pp. herd (OE. hēred), pret. ferde (OE. fērde) *he behaved*. ī, ū were shortened to i, u in all the north Midland and northern dialects and are still short in all the modern dialects of this area, but remained long in the other dialects, as bīnden, pp. bounden. Long vowels and diphthongs before the consonant groups which originally caused lengthening were shortened in monosyllabic forms during the late OE. period in Kentish, but were preserved in the inflected forms, as lamb : lāmbe, hand : hānda, hund *hound* : hūndas, eald : ēalde which in ME. became ealde, yalde (cp. § 63). This gave rise in ME. to many new formations through levelling out in different directions.

§ 71. ld : The lengthening before ld was generally preserved in all the dialects.

Anglian ā from older a (= early WS. and Ken. ea, later ēa) remained in early ME. in the northern dialects, but in

the Midland and some of the southern dialects it became
ǭ at the same time as old ā became ǫ (§ 51). In the other
southern dialects the later WS. ēa became ę̄ at the same
time as old ēa became ę̄, but the ēa remained a diphthong in
Kentish (§ 68). A few of these southern forms with ę̄ are
found in Chaucer, as hę̄lde *to hold*, wę̄lde *to rule*, although
the ę̄ had generally been ousted by the ǭ of the other
dialects in the early part of the thirteenth century. Ex-
amples are: cǭld, northern cāld, southern chę̄ld, Ken.
chealde *cold*, and similarly bǭld, fǭlden, hǭlden, ǭid, pret.
sǭlde, tǭlde, pp. sǭld, tǭld.

ę̄, also written ee, as fę̄ld (early OE. feld, later fēld) *field*,
chę̄lde *cold* sb., ę̄lde *old age*, ʒę̄lden *to recompense*, sę̄ld
seldom, schę̄rd *shield*, wę̄lden *to wield*.

ī, as chīld (early OE. cild, later cīld), and similarly mīlde,
wīlde.

ǭ, as gǭld (early OE. gold, later gōld) = early NE. gūld,
Gould, beside gŏld = NE. gold, and similarly mǭlde *mould*;
pret. schǭlde, wǭlde beside the unstressed forms schŏlde
(Orm shollde), wolde (Orm wollde).

§ 72. mb: cǭmb (cp. § 51), northern cāmb (early OE.
camb, later cāmb), and similarly lǫmb, later lamb, formed
from the pl. lambren, wǭmb (see § 128), pret. clǫmb *he
climbed*.

ī, as clīmben clȳmben (early OE. climban, later
clīmban).

ū, as dūmb doumb *dumb*, beside pp. clomben (o = u)
climbed.

§ 73. nd: Before nd all vowels were short or became
shortened in the late twelfth and the early thirteenth cen-
turies in the northern and north Midland dialects. In the
other Midland and the southern dialects they all, except ī
(= early OE. i, y) and ū, became shortened during the ME.
period, but the approximate date of this shortening is
difficult to fix.

The ǭ from older OE. a (o) before nasals remained until well on into the ME. period in the south Midland and the southern dialects, and then became shortened to o, hence Chaucer has o, but we have a in the north Midland and the northern dialects. And then the forms with o were gradually ousted by those with a towards the end of the fourteenth century. Examples are : Early ME. hǫnd, hānd, later hond, hand ; stǫnden, stānden, later stonden, standen, and similarly band sb., pret. band *he bound*, land, sand, strand, &c.

ę, as early ME. ęnde (early OE. ende, later ēnde) *end*, bęnden *to bend* ; later ende, benden, and similarly blenden, renden, spenden ; sęnden, later senden, but pret. always sende from older *sendde, and similarly with the preterite of the other verbs. The ME. ę from OE. īo (ēo), see § 65, seems not to have been regularly shortened before nd, as fręnd (OE. frīond, frēond) beside frend formed from the compound frendschipe (§ 92, 2), but always fęnd (OE. fīond, fēond), because there was no compound beside it.

ī, as blīnd, blind (early OE. blind, later blīnd), and similarly līnde *lime-tree*, rīnde, wīnd ; inf. bīnden, binden (early OE. bindan, later bīndan), and similarly fīnden, grīnden, wīnden, &c. ; kīnde, mīnde.

ū, as grūnd (generally written ground), grund (early OE. grund, later grūnd), and similarly hound, pound, sound *healthy*, wounde *wound*, past participles like bounden, founden, wounden *wound*.

§ 74. ng : The OE. lengthened ī, ū became short again in early ME. in all the dialects, as finger, ring, þing ; ʒung (ʒong) *young*, hunger (honger), tunge (tonge) *tongue* ; inf. singen, pp. sungen, and similarly springen, stingen, wringen.

The OE. lengthened ā (ō), ē became short again in the latter part of the thirteenth and early part of the fourteenth centuries, as lǎng, lǫng, later lang, long, and similarly

hongen *to hang,* strong, þong, wrong. lenger *longer,* lenþe (§ 263), mengen (mingen) *to mix,* streng (string) *string,* see § 132.

§ 75. Neither in OE. nor in ME. were short vowels lengthened when the consonant combination which usually caused lengthening was followed by a third consonant, see § 68. Examples are: Orm allderrmann : āld *old* ; comp. eldre eldere *elder,* seldere : sęld *seldom* ; pl. children childre : chīld, wildernesse : wīld; sing. and pl. schuldre (Orm sing. schulldre) *shoulder.* dumbnesse : doumb *dumb,* whence the back-formation dumb; pl. lambre, lambren : lāmb, whence the back-formation lamb; timbre *timber* ; slumbren. candle, gandre (OE. gandra), wandren; hindren, spindle; blundren, hundred, wundren, pl. wundres, from which a new singular wunder was formed. þunder always had short u, because it was from OE. þunor. Pl. engles, whence new sing. engel *angel.* Many exceptions to the above arose in ME. through new formations from the simple forms which regularly had long vowels, as chīldhęde, ·hǫde : chīld; fręndli beside frendli : fręnd; sęlden (Ellesmere MS. seelden) beside selden: sęld, &c.

§ 76. Long vowels also arose in early ME. through the loss of þ in the medial combinations ·þn·, ·þr· of words which had accented and unaccented forms side by side, as hĕn (ON. heþan) *hence,* sĕn, sĭn (OE. siþþan, sioþþan) *since,* þĕn (ON. þeþan) *thence,* wĕn, earlier wheþen (ON. hvaþan) *whence,* whĕr (OE. hweþer) *whether,* ŏr, early ME. oþ(e)r. Then after the analogy of forms like ME. hider, þider, whider with i were formed hiþen, þiþen, whiþen, which also became hĭn, þĭn, whĭn. Cp. § 249.

(2) The Lengthening of Short Vowels in Open Syllables.

§ 77. ME. short vowels, of whatever origin, were lengthened in open syllables of dissyllabic forms during the thirteenth century. The lengthening of a, e, o to ā, ę̄, ǭ took place in all the dialects, whereas that of i, u to ę̄, ǭ only took place in some of them. And as the lengthening of a, e, o took place earlier than that of i, u and with an entirely different result, we shall deal with them in two separate groups.

1. a, e, o

§ 78. The lengthening of a, e, o to ā, ę̄, ǭ took place somewhat earlier in the dialects north of the Humber than in those south of it, but in both areas the vowels had been lengthened before the end of the first half of the thirteenth century. In the dialects north of the Humber the new ā fell together with old ā (§ 51), but in the dialects south of it they were kept apart, because old ā had become ǭ (§ 51) before the lengthening of a to ā took place. The new ę̄, ǭ differed in quality from the ME. ę̄ which arose from OE. ǣ, ēa (§§ 52, 63), and the ǭ which arose from OE. ā (§ 51 and note). The new ę̄, ǭ were probably mid-front-wide like the long of the short e in standard NE. men, and mid-back-wide-round like the first element of the diphthong in standard NE. so, and the older ę̄, ǭ were low-front-narrow like the ai in standard NE. air and low-back-narrow-round like the a in standard NE. all. Although the two pairs have fallen together in standard NE. and may also have fallen together in the south Midland and southern dialects during the ME. period, they certainly did not fall together in the north Midland and northern dialects, because they are still kept apart in the modern dialects of this area, e.g. in Yks., Lanc., Derb., Stf. the new ę̄ has become ei, but the old ę̄ has become iə or some such diphthong. The new

ǭ has become ǫi and the older ǭ has become uǝ, ǫǝ or some such diphthong.

<center>ā</center>

§ 79. 1. From OE. a, as bāken (OE. bacan), hāre (OE. hara), and similarly āpe, awāken, bāþen, cāre, drāke, hāten *to hate*, lāke, māken, nāked, rāke, sāke, spāde, wāden, wāven. bāre (OE. masc. pl. bare) *bare*, dāle (OE. pl. dalu), gāte (OE. pl. gatu), and similarly blāde, glāde *glad*, grāve, lāte, smāle *small*, tāle. tāken (ON. taka), and similarly cāke, gāsen *to gaze*, gāpen *to gape*.

2. From OE. a (o) before nasals, as nāme, but nǫme in the west Midlands (OE. nama), see § 42, and similarly gāme, lāme, lāne, schāme, &c.

3. From OE. æ, south-eastern dialects e (§ 43), as fāder, fẹder, vẹder (OE. fæder, feder) *father*, rāven, rẹven (OE. hræfen, hrefen) *raven*, see § 102; and similarly āker *acre*, *field*, brāsen *brazen*, hāsel, pl. pāþes, wāter, &c.

4. From OE. ea, of whatever origin (§ 59), as āle (OE. ealu) *ale*, bāle (OE. bealu) *bale, evil*, and similarly cok-chāfer, māre *mare*, schāde, schāken, &c.

NOTE.—1. In both native and Fr. loan-words (§§ 195, 216) the ā became fronted to ǣ (= ẹ̄) in the fifteenth century, although the a was mostly retained in writing, see *ENE. Gr.* § 69.

2. For māken, tāken the northern and north Midland dialects had mak, tak through early loss of the final -en, and these forms are still preserved in the modern dialects of this area. The pret. and pp. māde, mād (maad) for older mākede, māked arose from the loss of intervocalic k. From the new pret. and pp. was then formed a new present mā(n), after the analogy of which was formed a new present tā(n) for tāken. These presents are also still preserved in the modern north Midland dialects.

3. hāven, hāvest, hāveþ (haþ) beside bihāven are the unstressed forms.

<center>ẹ̄</center>

§ 80. 1. From OE. e, as bẹren (OE. beran) *to bear*, mẹte (OE. mete) *meat*, stẹlen (OE. stelan) *to steal*, and similarly

uninflected forms were often made, as bisi *busy*, mikel, widow; sumer, þun(d)er, &c.

Other examples of type 1 are: northern gif : gēves *he gives*, lif : lę̄ves *he lives*; schip, smiþ, ˈwik : pl. schępes, smę̄þes, wękes; cum : cǫmes *he comes*; dur *door*, wud *wood*: pl. dǫres, wǫdes; and of type 2 : northern bȩsi *busy*: bisiness, mȩkel : mikelnèss, wȩdow : pl. widowes. East Anglian clę̄pe(n) *to call*, lǫve(n) *to love*; northern and East Anglian bȩtel *beetle*, crȩpel *cripple*, wȩvel *weevil*, &c. The past participles of strong verbs belonging to class I (§ 396) also regularly had ę̄, as drę̄ven *driven*, rȩsen *risen*, wrȩten *written*, but they generally came to have i through new formations. Already in late OE. the past participles with ·t· often had ·tt· beside ·t·, as bitten, written beside biten, writen, which gradually gained the upper hand, and then the ·i· in this type of verb was extended analogically to the other verbs, as driven, riden, risen, &c.

NOTE.— The ǭ which arose from u became ū in the northern dialects at the same time as old ǭ became ū about 1300, see § 55.

(3) THE SHORTENING OF LONG VOWELS.

§ 86. Long vowels and long diphthongs were shortened before certain consonant combinations during the OE. period and especially in late OE. :—(*a*) Before combinations of three consonants, as pl. bremblas beside sing. brēm(b)el *bramble*. (*b*) Before two consonants in trisyllabic and polysyllabic forms, as enlefan from older *ǣnlefan *eleven*, hlammæsse beside older hlāfmæsse *Lammas*, samcucu (from *sāmi·, older *sǣmi·) *half dead*, gen. twentiges : nom. twēntig *twenty*, blissian beside older blīþsian *to rejoice*, pl. deorlingas : dēorling *darling*. (*c*) Before double consonants + r, as gen. attres beside nom. ātor, whence new nom. attor beside ātor *poison* ; blæddre,

næddre beside older blædre *bladder*, nædre *adder*, comp.
hwittra : hwīt *white*, gen. foddres beside nom. **fōdor**,
whence new nom. foddor beside fōdor *fodder*, comp.
deoppra : dēop *deep*, see *EOE. Gr.* § 146. (*d*) Before
double consonants, as acc. ænne, enne beside older ǣnne
one, þrittig beside older þrītig *thirty* ; wimman beside older
wīfman *woman*. (*e*) In trisyllabic forms before single con-
sonants, as haligdōm : hālig *holy*, pl. ænige, -u : sing.
ǣnig *any*, pl. cicenu : sing. cīcen *chicken*, whence new
singular cicen, suþerne : sūþ *south*, pl. heafodu : hēa-
fod *head*. (*f*) And in late OE. and early ME. long vowels
began to be shortened before the consonant combinations
which caused lengthening in early OE., see § 68.

§ 87. In the following treatment of the shortening of
long vowels, we shall, as a rule, not distinguish between
shortenings which took place in OE. and those which only
took place in ME. So far, then, as ME. is concerned it may
be said that all long vowels, whether original long vowels or
long vowels which arose from old long diphthongs, were
shortened in late OE. and early ME. before double con-
sonants and before all consonant combinations other than
those which caused the lengthening of short vowels (§ 68).
Long vowels were also shortened before single consonants
in trisyllabic forms of which many arose in ME. from the
development of svarabhakti vowels, as in breþeren from
older breþren (§ 152, 1), or were new formations made from
the uninflected forms, as in the pl. wepenes for older
wepnes formed from the sing. wepen *weapon*. This kind
of shortening took place in the thirteenth century, as Orm
still preserved the long vowels in this position. And just
as long vowels were shortened in words of this type, so also
short vowels remained unlengthened before single con-
sonants in trisyllabic forms (§ 83).

§ 88. Before dealing with the shortening of the various
separate long vowels before consonant combinations we will

deal with the shortening in trisyllabic forms, as **clavere** beside **clǫver** (OE. **cláfre**) *clover*, see § 51; **laverke** later **larke** (OE. **láwerce**) *lark*; **erende** beside older **ę̄rende** (OE. **ǽrende**) *errand*, and similarly **evere** (§152, 1), pl. **heringes, nevere, redili** beside **rędi, selinesse** beside **sę̄li, sę̄li** *happy*, pl. **wepenes** from older **wę̄penes** *weapons*; pl. **stirǫpes** (OE. **stírápas**) *stirrups*; **breþeren** from older **brę̄þeren**; **slumeren** : OE. **slúma** *slumber*. From the trisyllabic were often made new disyllabic forms with short vowel, as **hering, redi, wepen,** &c., beside **hęring, rędi, wępen,** &c.

§ 89. In dealing with the shortening of long vowels before consonant groups it is necessary to take into consideration the question of chronology. When **ǣ** was shortened in OE. it became **æ** and then **a** in ME. (§ 43), but when ME. **ę̄** from OE. **ǣ** was shortened in ME. it became **e**, whence we have forms side by side in ME. with **a** and **e**. And similarly when **ēa** was shortened in OE. it became **ea** and then **a** in ME. (§ 59), but when ME. **ę̄** from OE. **ēa** (§ 63) was shortened in ME. it became **e**, whence we have forms side by side in ME. with **a** and **e**. When **ēo** was shortened in OE. it became **eo** and then **e** in ME. (§ 60), and when ME. **ę̄** from OE. **ēo** (§ 65) was shortened in ME. it became **e**, so that in this case the result was the same.

§ 90. **ā** became **a**, as **axen, asken** (OE. **áxian, áscian**) *to ask*, pp. **clad** from *cládd (OE. **cláþod**) *clothed*, **hatte** (OE. **hátte**) *is or was called*, **halwen** (OE. **hálgian**) *to hallow*, **halwes** (OE. **þā hálgan**) *Hallows*, **lammasse** (OE. **hláf-mæsse**) *Lammas*. In comparatives like **bradder** : **brād, brǫd**, beside the new formation **brǫder**; **hatter** : **hāt, hǫt** beside the new formation **hǫter** later **hotter**, see § 51.

§ 91. **ǣ** became **a, e**. It should be remembered that late OE. **ǣ** is of threefold origin, viz. Germanic **ǣ** (§ 52), the i-umlaut of **ā** (§ 52), and late OE. **ǣ** from older **ēa** (§ 63). Germanic **ǣ** became **ę̄** in Anglian and Kentish in early OE., so that the shortening in these dialects is always **e**, whether

it took place in OE. or ME. ǣ the i-umlaut of ā became ę in
early Kentish (§ 52), so that the shortening is always e in
this dialect.   In all the dialects we have a or e from late
OE. ǣ (= early OE. ēa) according as the shortening took
place in OE. or ME.   Examples are:—

1. bladder, bledder (late OE. blæddre older blǣdre)
bladder, pret. dradde, dredde, pp. drad, dred *dreaded,* and
similarly ampti, em(p)ti *empty,* medwe (OE. inflected form
mǣdwe) beside męde (OE. mǣd) *meadow,* nadder, nedder
adder, pret. radde, redde *he read,* pret. slepte, wrastlen,
wrestlen *to wrestle.*

2. clansen, clensen (OE. clænsian) *to cleanse,* fat, fet
(OE. fætt) *fat,* and similarly clanli, clenli *cleanly,* helþe
health, laddre, leddre *ladder,* lafdi, lefdi *lady,* pret. lafte,
lefte *he left,* lasse, lesse *less,* lasten, lesten *to follow,*
wraþþe, wreþþe *wrath;* pret. ladde, ledde (OE. lædde
older lǣdde), pp. lad, led *led,* and similarly cladde, cledde,
clad, cled; pret. lente, pp. lent (OE. lǣned) *lent;* spradde
spredde, sprad, spred; swatte, swette *sweated;* ęni (OE.
ǣnig) *any* beside ME. pl. anie, enie from which was formed
a new singular ani, eni (cp. § 83).

3. biraft, bireft : biręven (OE. berēafian) *to deprive, rob,*
chapman, chepman (OE. cēapman), and similarly grattre,
grettre *greater,* laþer (OE. lēaþor, gen. lēaþres) *lather,*
schepherde, þratte, þrette *he threatened.*

§ 92. Late OE. ę, of whatever origin, became e:—

1. ę = i-umlaut of ō, as pret. bledde (OE. bledde, older
blēdde) *he bled,* and similarly fedde, grette *he greeted,* kepte,
mette; demde, forms like dęmde, węnde *he hoped* were
ME. new formations from the present; blessen, breþeren.
twenti, ten (Orm tenn) is a back-formation from forms
like tenþe, tenfǫld.

2. ę = OE. ēo (§ 65), as devel (OE. dēofol, gen. dēofles)
devil, lemman (OE. lēofmann) *sweetheart,* and similarly
deppre *deeper,* ferþing, frendschipe, whence the back-

formation frend beside frḙnd (§ 73), seknesse, stepfader; pret. fell (OE. fēoll) *he fell*, and similarly crepte, lepte.

3. Non-WS. ēo (īo) = early WS. īe, as derling (OE. dēorling, dīerling) *darling*, and similarly depþe *depth*, derre *dearer*, þefte.

4. ON. ē, as felaȝe, felawe (O.Icel. fēlage) *fellow*.

5. OE. i-umlaut of ēa, as grettre (OE. grīetra) *greater*.

§ 93. ī became i, as children, childre : child, fifte (OE. fīfta) *fifth*, and similarly Cristmesse, cristnen, fifti, liȝt light *a light*, liȝt light *light*, litel, lütel (OE. lītel, lȳtel, gen. lītles, lȳtles), whence the ME. new formation litel, lütel *little*, stiffer, whence the new formation stif (OE. stīf) *stiff*, wimman, wisdọm.

§ 94. ọ became o, as fodder (OE. fōdor, gen. fōdres), gosling : gọs, pret. schodde, pp. schod : schọn *to shoe*, and similarly blostme, blosme *blossom*, bosme *bosom*, softe. For the late OE. combination oht from older ōht see § 113, 5.

§ 95. ū became u, as dust (OE. dūst) *dust*, husbonde : hūs (hous), rust (OE. rūst) (see § 97), þursdai (OE. þūres-dæg) O.Icel. þōrs-dagr *Thursday*, þuȝte (OE. þuhte, older þūhte) *it seemed*, udder (OE. ūder, gen. ūdres).

§ 96. Late OE. ī, ē, ü from early OE. ȳ (§ 57) were regularly shortened to i, e, ü (written u), as fist, vest, füst (early OE. fȳst), and similarly filþe, þimel (early OE. þȳmel, gen. þȳmles) *thimble*, wischen; pret. hidde, hedde, hüdde (early OE. hȳdde), pp. hid, hed, hüd (early OE. hȳded) *hid*, and similarly kidde, pp. kid *made known*.

§ 97. Long vowels were regularly shortened in closed syllables before such combinations as ·sch, ·st, but remained long in open syllables through the consonant combinations belonging to the second syllable. This gave rise to double forms in ME. according as the vowel of the uninflected forms was levelled out into the inflected forms or as the vowel of the inflected forms was levelled out into the un-

inflected forms. Regular forms were: flesch (OE. flǣsc),
gen. flęsches; brest (OE. brēost), gen. bręstes, whence
flesch, brest beside flęsch, bręst. At a later period one
or other of the forms became generalized. Examples of the
former are: blast (OE. blǣst) *blast*, brest (OE. brēost),
dust (OE. dūst), rust (OE. rūst), fist, vest, füst (early OE.
fȳst), flesch (OE. flǣsc), mesch (OE. mǣsce), wisch,
wesch, wüsch (early OE. wȳsc). Examples of the latter
are: gāst, gǭst (OE. gāst) *ghost*, Crīst, ęst (OE. ēast) *cast*,
pręst (OE. prēost) *priest*. For forms like brust *breast*,
prust *priest* in the west Midland and Southern dialects, see
§§ 60, 65.

§ 98. From numerous examples given in the previous
paragraphs it·will be seen that long vowels were regularly
shortened in derivatives and compounds when the stem-
syllable was followed by one or more syllables with a strong
secondary accent, as in alderman : ǭld, older āld, chapman :
OE. cēap, Cristmesse : Crīst, frendli, frendschipe : fręnd,
halidai : OE. hālig *holy*, lavedi, lafdi (Orm laffdig) : OE.
hlǣfdige *lady*, wildernesse : wīlde, wisdǭm : wīs, &c.
This rule was, however, very often broken through new
formations made from the simplex, as fręndli, kĭndnesse,
wīsli, &c. Cp. § 75.

§ 99. Through causes which have never been satisfactorily
explained a few ME. words have i beside e for the shortening
of ę̄, ę̣, as briþeren beside breþeren, pret. fil beside fel
(OE. fēoll) *he fell*, gritte beside grette *he greeted* (§ 425),
hild beside older hęld *he held* (§ 414), kipte beside kepte
(§ 424), þifte beside þefte (§ 92, 3), hipbrembles beside
hepbrembles (OE. hēopbremblas) *dog-roses*, from which
were formed the simplex hipe beside hepe (mod. dialects ep),
hępe *hip*, and similarly siknesse beside seknesse (OE.
sēocnes), whence sik beside sek, sęk, silinesse beside
selinesse (OE. gesǣlignes), whence sili beside seli, sę̄li,
sę̣li.

§ **100.** Through causes which have never been clearly defined there was a tendency from about the beginning of the thirteenth century onwards in some dialects to shorten long vowels before a single consonant in monosyllables. And this kind of shortening became quite common in the fifteenth century. It is possible that the shortening started out from such monosyllables being used in the sentence before other words beginning with a consonant, and that then the shortened forms came to be used in other positions. Examples from the *Ormulum* are: dæþþ (OE. dēaþ) beside dǣþ *death*, pret. drohh (OE. drōh) beside drōh *he drew*, comm (OE. c(w)ōm) *he came,* toþþ (OE. tōþ) *tooth*, watt (OE. wāt) beside wāt *he knews*, &c. ; and from other ME. texts : bred *bread*, ded *dead*, fott *foot*, godd *good*, hedd *head*, þeff *thief*, &c. Forms like grat, gret (OE. grēat) *great*, hat *hot*, stif (OE. stīf), swet *sweet* were new formations from the comparative gratter, gretter, &c.

§ **101.** Long vowels were also shortened in unaccented forms, as an (OE. ān) *one, an*, but beside būt (OE. būtan) *except*, nat, not (OE. nāwiht, nōwiht, nāht, nōht) *nothing, not*, scholde (Orm shollde, sollde) beside schǫlde *should*, us (Orm uss) beside ūs, Orm þehh (OE. þēah) beside þohh (ON. *þōh) *though*, wham, whom beside whǫm (OE. hwām) *whom*, wolde (Orm wollde) beside wǫlde *would*; and similarly with personal pronouns like mĕ, wĕ, þŭ, ȝĕ, hĕ.

(4) Variable Vowel Length in Stem-syllables.

§ **102.** In ME. dissyllabic nouns and adjectives ending in ·el, ·em, ·en, ·er the vowel in the second syllable belonged originally to the uninflected forms only, see *EOE. Gr.* § 96. But already in OE. the vowel in the uninflected forms was generally levelled out into the inflected forms when the stem-syllable was short, as nom. sing. æcer, cradol, efen, gen. æceres, cradoles, efenes beside æcres, cradles, efnes.

And so also in ME. we have side by side forms with and
without the medial vowel, as **akeres, cradeles, evenes**
beside **akres, cradles, evnes**. ME. short vowels in open
stem-syllables regularly remained short in trisyllabic forms
(§ 83), so that lengthening of the stem-vowel took place
regularly in the uninflected forms only, but regularly
remained short in the inflected forms. Then one of two
things happened: Either the long vowel of the uninflected
forms was levelled out into the inflected forms or the short
vowel of the inflected forms was levelled out into the un-
inflected forms. This often gave rise to double forms in
ME. itself, as **crādel, wāter, ēven, ǭpen** beside **cradel,
water, even, open,** and similarly **fāder** beside **fader** from
the inflected forms **faderes, fadres.** During the ME. period
one or other of the doublets usually became generalized.
And this difference in the stem-vowel of words of this type
is reflected in standard NE. down to the present day, cp.
**acre, brazen, cockchafer, cradle, hazel, ladle, maple,
raven, staple, taper; beaver** (ME. **bēver** beside **bever**),
**besom, evil, even, weasel; open; beside fathom, hammer,
madder, saddle, shackle, swaddle, wattle; eleven,
heaven, kettle, leather, nettle, seven, weather; bottom,
copper, hovel, otter.** The modern dialects have often
preserved the forms which have not survived in the standard
language, as **brăzen, stăple, ĕven, ŏpen.**

The past participles of strong verbs, just like dissyllabic
nouns and adjectives ending in -en, had double forms in
ME., as **tāken, trēden, gēten, brǭken, stǭlen** beside **tăken,
trĕden, gĕten, brŏken, stŏlen (stŏln).** At a later period
one or other of the forms became generalized, e. g. stems
ending in -r, -d, -t generally had the short vowel, as **bŏren
(bŏrn), gĕten, sŏden,** and the others generally had the long
vowel, as **tāken, brǭken, stǭlen, &c.,** which more or less
agrees with the development in the NE. standard language.
On the other hand the modern dialects, especially the

northern and north Midland, have usually generalized the forms with short vowels, as tăken, ĕten, brŏken, chŏzen, spŏken, trŏden, &c.

§ 103. OE. monosyllabic nouns and adjectives containing an æ (a), e, or o in the stem-syllable gave rise to double forms in ME. according as the vowel of the inflected forms was levelled out into the uninflected forms, or as the vowel of the uninflected forms was levelled out into the inflected forms. Examples of such double forms are:—bāre beside bar (OE. bær, gen. bares) *bare*, lāte beside lat (OE. læt, gen. lates) *late*, and similarly cǭle beside col (OE. col, gen. coles) *coal*, smāle beside smal, whāle beside whal, &c. During the ME. period one or other of these forms became generalized. Examples of the former kind of levelling are : bāre, dāle, gāte, grāve, lāte, smāle, tāme, whāle ; cǭle, hǭle *hole*, ʒǭke beside Orm's ʒocc. And examples of the latter kind of levelling are : bak, baþ, blak, bras, glad, glas, gras, paþ, staf ; broþ, God, lok, &c.

(5) The Formation of New Diphthongs in ME.

§ 104. One of the great characteristic differences between OE. and ME. is the monophthongization of the typical OE. diphthongs in ME. (§ 58), and the development of a large number of diphthongs of an entirely different type, the second element of which contained an i (y) or u (w). Although late OE. had a small number of such diphthongs, e. g. dæi (Ken. dei) *day*, Ken. meiden beside older megden *maiden*, mǣw, mēu *seagull*, gen. sāwle, sāule beside sāwol *soul*, cp. *EOE. Gr.* § 79, the number became greatly increased through sound-changes which took place in early ME., especially the vocalization of intervocalic palatal and guttural ʒ, and the development of glides between a vowel and a following palatal and guttural h (= χ), written h, ʒ or gh in ME.

In OE. the -i (**y**) and -u (**w**) type of diphthong only occurred finally and before consonants, and this must also have been the case in the earliest ME. period, but already in early ME. diphthongs seem to have arisen before a following vowel through a change of syllabic division in the combination vowel + ʒ (= i-consonant) or **w** + vowel whereby the ʒ or **w** was transferred from the second to the first syllable. When the first element was originally long it became shortened at the time the diphthong was formed. When such diphthongs are marked as long in ME. grammars the sign of length merely indicates that the first element was long before the formation of the diphthongs. It was very common, especially finally and before **n**, to write **y** for the second element of i-diphthongs and **w** for the second element of u-diphthongs. The new diphthongs which arose in ME. were all falling diphthongs. On the other hand the Kentish diphthongs of the ME. period which arose from the OE. falling diphthongs ēa, īo (ēo) were rising diphthongs, see §§ 63, 67.

§ 105. The formation of new diphthongs in ME. was mainly due to the following causes :—

1. Intervocalic and final postvocalic **w** combined with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong of the u-type in the first half of the twelfth century.

2. The vocalization of palatal and guttural ʒ to i- and u-consonant respectively. In the former case the i-consonant combined with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong of the i-type, and in the latter case a diphthong of the u-type was formed. The vocalization of palatal ʒ to i-consonant took place already in late OE. after palatal vowels finally and before consonants, and in early ME. also medially between vowels. The medial guttural ʒ began to become **w** after back vowels before the end of the twelfth century and then later it combined with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong of the u-type.

3. A great many of the ME. diphthongs arose from the development of a glide between a vowel and a following palatal and guttural h (= χ) in the thirteenth century. In the former case the glide eventually became i-consonant, and in the latter u-consonant which combined with the preceding vowel to form diphthongs of the i- and u-type.

The new diphthongs which arose in the native element of the language in the early ME. period were:—ai, ei, au, ęu, eu, ǫu, ou, iu. Through sound-changes which took place during the ME. period the number of diphthongs became somewhat reduced. The ei, of whatever origin, generally became ai about 1300 and thus fell together with old ai, although the ei was often retained in writing until a much later date. ęu and iu fell together in iu about the end of the thirteenth century. In some dialects, e. g. Chaucer's, ǫu and ǫu fell together in ǫu in the early fourteenth century, but they did not fall together in all the dialects as is proved by their being still kept apart in many of the modern dialects, see *E.D. Gr.* §§ 127–8, 166–8. To the above list of diphthongs may be added the ǫi, ui in French loan-words (§§ 206, 207).

<div align="center">ai</div>

§ 106. OE. æ + palatal g (= ɜ) became æi partly in late OE. and partly in early ME., and then the æi became ai (§ 43), also written ay, as mai may (OE. mæg) *he may*, fai(e)r (OE. fæger) *fair*, hail (OE. hægl) *hail*, main (OE. mægen) *power*, saide (OE. sægde) *he said*, and similarly brain, dai (gen. sing. and the new nom. pl. daies dayes formed direct from the singular), fain, pret. lai, maiden, nail, snail, tail; pp. said, slain.

NOTE.—In some parts of the North, Midlands, and the South a became ai before sch in the thirteenth century, as aische (OE. æsce, asce) *ashes*, waischen (OE. wascan) *to wash*, and the ai is

still preserved in some of the north Midland and south-western dialects down to the present day (*ED. Gr.* § 27).

<center>ei</center>

§ 107. Early ME. ei, also written **ey**, was of various origins, and in most cases it became **ai**, also written **ay**, about 1300.

1. From OE. e + palatal g (= ʒ), as **wei (OE. weg)** *way*, pp. leʒen leiʒen lei(e)n ley(e)n (OE. legen) *lain*, **pleʒen** pleiʒen pleien (OE. plegian) *to play*, and similarly **eie** *awe*, rein beside Southern rẹn (WS. rēn), seil *sail*, pp. **sei(e)n** sey(e)n (Anglian gesegen) *seen*, **weien** *to weigh*; **leiest, leiþ,** pret. leide beside Southern lẹde (WS. lēde), pp. **leid** *laid*. The ME. northern and Midland infinitives **leyen (lei, lai)** and **seyen (seyn, sei, sai)** beside the southern regular forms **leggen, seggen** were new formations made from the second and third persons singular **leyest, leiþ** and **seyest, seiþ,** and similarly the first pers. singular, the regular forms of which would be **legge (OE. lecge), segge (OE. secge)**.

2. From Ken. e + palatal ʒ = WS. æ + palatal ʒ (§ 43), as dei *day*, lei *he lay*, meiden, seide *he said*.

3. From Ken. e + palatal ʒ = WS. y + palatal ʒ (§ 49), as reie (Ken. rege, WS. ryge) *rye*, and similarly **beien beyen** *to buy* (see leyen above).

4. From late OE. e (= early WS. ea) + h or ht (§ 28), as eiʒte eighte (early WS. eahta) *eight*, and similarly **feight** *he fought*, leighter *laughter*, pret. seiʒ seigh (Chaucer also say) *he saw*, streight *straight*.

5. From OE. ǣ or ēa + palatal g (= ʒ), as clei cley (OE. clǣg) *clay*, neien (OE. hnǣgan) *to neigh*; dreiʒ *he endured*, and similarly **ei ey** *egg*, eiþer *either*, grei, kei key *key*, pret. pl. leien *they lay*, seien (OE. sǣgon) *they saw*, **weie** *weighing-machine*, whei whey, cp. § 35.

6. Late OE. ẹ, of whatever origin, + g (= ʒ) or h (written h, ʒ, gh in ME.) had various developments in ME. which

were due partly to the position of the ʒ and h in the word, partly to difference of dialect, and partly to new formations through levelling out in different directions:—

When the ę̄ʒ stood before a following vowel at the time of the formation of diphthongs it generally became ei in the North and Midlands, but ī, mostly written y, through the intermediate stage īʒ in some parts of the Midlands, especially the south Midlands including the dialect of Chaucer, and the South, but the modern dialects show that the ī did not occur in the north Midlands, otherwise it would have become ai whereas they have ī from older ę̄ in words of this type. Examples are :—M. deien, S. dīen dȳen (late OE. dēgian) *to dye*; eie, ȳe (late OE. ēge, § 35) *eye*; fleien, flȳen (late OE. flēgan) *to fly*, and similarly deien, dȳen *to die*; dreie, drȳe *tedious*, *dree*; fleie, flȳe *fly*; leien, lȳen *to tell lies*; pret. pl. seien, sȳen *they saw*, from which was formed a new sing. sȳ beside the regular form seih, seiʒ (late OE. seh); teien, tȳen *to tie*; wreien (cp. NE. be-wray), wrȳen *to accuse*. Cp. § 118.

NOTE.—In some parts of the North, Midlands, and the South e, of whatever origin, became ei before sch in the thirteenth century, as fleisch *flesh* (cp. § 97), freisch *fresh*, neisch *tender*, þreischen *to thresh*, which has been preserved in some dialects down to the present day, see Index to *ED. Gr.*

§ 108. In the northern and north Midland dialects the ę̄ʒ in the above and similar forms had come to stand finally through early loss of the following syllable. These dialects accordingly had ę̄ʒ (= ę̄χ, generally written ę̄gh), and later ę̄ with loss of the gh in pronunciation in the first half of the fourteenth century, as dę̄gh *to dye*, ę̄gh *eye*, flę̄gh *to fly*, lę̄gh *he lied*, later dę̄, ę̄, flę̄, lę̄ which have regularly become dī, ī, flī, līd in the modern dialects of this area. But when the following vowel was preserved these dialects also had ei, like the Midland, as eien eies *eyes*, fleies *he flies*, leies *he tells lies*,

&c. And then new formations often took place through
levelling out in different directions, as flei formed from fleies,
and flēghes formed from flēgh; &c.

§ 109. Medially before consonants and finally late OE. ēh
(cp. §§ 35, 36) generally became eih, mostly written eigh, in
the dialects south of the Humber, and then later īgh in some
of the southern dialects. When the ei came to stand before
vowels through the addition of inflexional endings it became
ī. Regular forms were e.g. heigh (mod. n. Midl. dialects ei)
high beside pl. hīe, and then through levelling out in both
directions either the ei- or the ī-form, usually the latter,
became generalized, as in Chaucer hīgh hȳ beside heigh,
nīgh nȳ beside neigh (mod. n. Midl. dialects nei) *nigh*, *near*,
and similarly slīgh slȳe slȳ beside sleigh (ON. slœgr),
þīgh beside þeigh, heighte (mod. n. Midl. dialects eit) beside
hiȝte hīghte due to the influence of hīgh.

In the northern and some of the north Midland dialects
the ēh (generally written ēgh) remained in the above and
similar forms, as þēh þēgh (mod. dialects þī) *thigh*.

<center>au</center>

§ 110. ME. au, also written aw, was of various origins:—

1. From OE. antevocalic a + w or f (= v), as awel aul
awl (OE. awul, awel) *awl*, clawe clau claw (late OE.
clawu beside the regular nom. clēa), strau straw, formed
from the OE. inflected forms like gen. strawes, and
similarly rau raw; þawen (OE. þawian) *to thaw*; hawek
later hauk (OE. hafoc), nauger (OE. nafogār) *auger*.

2. From OE. ā + w in the dialects north of the Humber,
as blawe blau (OE. blāwan) *to blow*, snau (OE. snāw)
snow, auþer (OE. āwþer) *either*, and similarly crawe crau
to crow, knawe knau *to know*, saule *soul*, slau *slow*. See
§ 113, 1.

3. From OE. a + guttural g (= ȝ), as drawen (OE. dragan)
to draw, pl. dawes (OE. dagas) beside daies, formed from

the sing. dai *day*, hawe (OE. hagu) *haw*, and similarly gnawen, lawe *law*. mawe *stomach*, sawe *a saw*, pp. slawen from OE. slagen beside slain from slægen.

4. From OE. ā + guttural g (= ʒ) in the dialects north of the Humber, as āʒen awe (OE. āgan) *to possess*, awen auen aun (OE. āgen) *own*, sawen (OE. sāwon) *they saw* from which was formed the singular saw, þrawe (OE. þrāg) *space of time*.

5. From Anglian æ (§ 43) = WS. ea before h and ht, as saugh (Angl. sæh, WS. seah) *he saw*, faught (Angl. fæht, WS. feaht) *he fought*, and similarly aughte *eight*, laughter, maught *might*, naught *night*, straught *straight*, straughte *he stretched*. But the northern dialects did not develop a glide before h and ht, as saʒ sagh, aʒte aghte, faʒt faght, laʒter laghter, maʒt maght, naʒt naght, slaʒter slaghter.

6. From late OE. æ (§ 43), a, older ǣ, ā before ht, as aught (OE. āht) *aught, anything*, rauʒte raughte (OE. rǣhte, rāhte) *he reached*, and similarly tauʒte taughte *he taught*, nauʒt naught *naught, nothing*.

NOTE.—A new au arose in late ME. through the development of a glide between a and a following l + consonant. This glide eventually became full u-consonant, and then combined with the preceding a to form the diphthong au, as aull *all*, faull(e) *to fall*, haulf *half*, taulk(e) *to talk*, see *ENE. Gr.* § 102.

ęu

§ 111. ME. ęu, also written ęw, was of various origins :—

1. From OE. ǣ and ēa (§ 63) + w, as slęuþe (OE. slǣwþ) *sloth*, dęu dęw (OE. dēaw) *dew*, fęwe fęu (OE. fēawe) *few*, hęwen hęu (OE. hēawan) *to hew*, and similarly pret. ręu *he rued*, schęwen *to show*, þęu þęw *custom*. For the falling diphthong in the above and similar words Ken. also had a rising diphthong, written yau, eau (eaw), as dyau, sseawy *to show*, see § 63.

2. From OE. ĕow, as ęwe (OE. eowe) *ewe*, sęwen sęu (OE. seowian) *to sew*, stręwen (OE. streow(i)an) *to strew*.

3. From OE. antevocalic e + f (= v), as ęwte older evete (OE. efete) *newt*.

NOTE. – In a few words the OE. éa became a rising diphthong eá which in ME. became ā (later ǫ § 51) by absorption of the first element. This gave rise to double forms like schǫwen beside schęwen *to show*; and similarly with eów beside éow in sǫwen, strǫwen beside sęwen, stręwen.

<p style="text-align:center">ęu</p>

§ 112. The chief sources of ęu, also written ęw, are : OE. ēow (cp. § 65), and the Non-WS. ēow, īow = WS. īew (§ 66). The ęu became iu about 1300 and thus fell together with iu from OE. īw (§ 116), although the eu was mostly retained in writing, but was also sometimes written iw, as briwen, &c.

1. From OE. ēow, as bręwen bręu (OE. brēowan) *to brew*, and similarly chęwen chęu *to chew*, ręwen ręu *to rew*; pret. of the old reduplicated strong verbs (§ 414), as blęu blęw (OE. blēow) *he blew*, and similarly gręu, knęu, þręu.

2. From Non-WS. īo (ēo) + w = WS. īe + w, as nęwe niwe (Non-WS. nīowe, nēowe) *new*, and similarly clęwe *clew*, hęu hęw hęwe *hue*, ręuþe *ruth*, tręwe *true*, tręwen *to trow*.

For forms like bruwen, ruwen, bluwe blwe *blew*, knuwe knwe *knew*, huwe hwe *hue*, nuwe nwe *new*, truwe trwe trw *true* in the southern and west Midland dialects see § 65.

NOTE. – 1. In a few words OE. initial ēow became a rising diphthong, as ʒou (OE. acc. ēow) *you*, ʒower ʒour (OE. ēower) *your*, and then later the ʒou- became ʒū-, although the old spelling was generally preserved.

2. In some words OE. medial éow became a rising diphthong eów which in ME. became ǫu (ǫw) by absorption of the first element. This often gave rise to double forms in ME., as chǫwen

beside **chewen**, and similarly **fǫwer foure** *four*, **rowen** *to rue*, **trowen, trǫuþe** *truth*. For the later change of **ou** to **ǫu**, cp. § 114, 1, and for the further change of **ǫu** to **au** in some dialects, as **fauer faur, trawþe traupe**, see § 113 note.

<div align="center">ǫu</div>

§ 113. ME. **ǫu**, also written **ǫw**, was of various origins:—

1. ME. **ǭ + w** = OE. **ā + w** in the dialects south of the Humber (§ 51), as **blǫwen** (OE. **blāwan**) *to blow*, **snǫw** (OE. **snāw**) *snow*, **sǫwle sǫule** (OE. **sāwol**, gen. **sāwle**) *soul*, and similarly **crǫwe** *crow*, **crǫwen, knǫwen, mǫwen, ǫuþer** *either*, **nǫuþer** *neither*, **slǫw, rǫwe** *row*, **sǫwen, þrǫwen**.

2. From OE. **o + guttural g** (= ȝ), as **bǫue, bǫwe** (OE. **boga**) *bow*, pp. **flǫwen flǫu(e)n** (OE. **flogen**) *flown*, pl. **trǫwes** (OE. **trogas**) *troughs*.

3. From early ME. **ǭ + ȝ** = OE. **ā + guttural g** (= ȝ) in the dialects south of the Humber (§ 51), as **ǫwen** (OE. **āgan**) *to possess*, **ǫwen** (OE. adj. **āgen**) *own*, **þrǫwe** (OE. **þrāg**) *time, period*; **lǫwe** (O. Icel. **lāgr**) *low*.

4. From OE. **o + h** or **ht**, as **trǫuȝ trǫugh** (OE. **troh, trog**) *trough*, **dǫuȝter dǫughter** (OE. **dohtor**) *daughter*, pp. **fǫuȝten fǫughten** (OE. **fohten**) *fought*, and similarly pret. **wrǫughte** (but west Midland **warhte wrahte**), pp. **wrǫught**.

5. From **ōht** which was shortened to **oht** during the OE. period, as **ǫuȝt ǫught** (OE. **ōht, oht**) *anything*, pret. **brǫuȝte, brǫughte** (OE. **brōhte, brohte**) *he brought*, pp. **brǫuȝt brǫught** (OE. **brōht, broht**), and similarly **nǫught** *naught*, **sǫughte, sǫught; þǫughte, þǫught**.

Note.—The **ǫu** in 1. became **au** in some dialects, especially in the Kentish and parts of the n., nw. and w. Midland in the fourteenth century; and the **ǫu** in 2. also became **au** in the nw. Midland. Examples are: **blawe(n)** *to blow*, **knawe(n)** *to know*, **saule** (Ken. **zaule**) *soul*, **snau** *snow*, **þrawe(n)** *to throw*, &c.; **bawe** *bow*, **flawe(n)** *flown*, &c. See § 114, 1.

ou

§ 114. ǫu, also written ǫw, was of various origins :—

1. From OE. ō + w, as blǫwen (OE. blōwan) *to bloom,
blossom*, flǫwen (OE. flōwan) *to flow*, and similarly glǫwen,
grǫwen, lǫwen *to low*, rǫwen, stǫwe *place*. In some
dialects, e. g. Chaucer's dialect, the ǫu became ǫu in the
early part of the fourteenth century, and thus fell together
with the ǫu in § 113, but they did not fall together in all the
dialects as is evidenced by many of the modern dialects
which still keep them apart. In the north and north-west
Midlands, for example, the ǫu has become ǫu (flǫu, grǫu,
&c.), but the ǫu has become ǫə, ǭ (krǭə *crow*, nǭə *to know*,
&c.) from older au, see § 113 and note.

2. From OE. ō + final guttural ·h (= ·χ) and medial
guttural ·g· (= ·ȝ·), cp. *EOE. Gr.* § 172. It is necessary to
distinguish between the final and the medial position,
because the development in ME. was not the same in both
cases :—

(*a*) Final ·ōh regularly became ·ǫuh (also written ·ǫuȝ,
·ǫugh) which later became ·ǫugh as in 1. above, as bǫugh
(OE. bōh) *bough*, inǫugh (OE. genōh) *enough*, þǫugh (ON.
*þōh) *though*, and similarly drǫugh *he drew*, lǫugh *he laughed*,
plǫugh, slǫugh *he slew*, tǫugh, &c.

(*b*) Medial antevocalic ·ōȝ- became ǫu, also written ·ow·,
which then became ·ū·, although the ·ou·, ·ow· were retained
in writing through the influence of the Anglo-Norman
system of orthography (§ 9), as pl. bowes (OE. bōgas)
boughs, drowen (OE. drōgon) *they drew*, and similarly
lowen *they laughed*, plowes *ploughs*, slowen *they slew*, &c.
Cp. § 120.

(*c*) Then new uninflected forms were often made by
levelling out the ou (ow) = ū of the inflected forms, as bow
beside bǫugh, drou drow beside drough, inou inow beside
inǫugh, plow beside plǫugh, slow beside slǫugh, &c.

§ 115. The combinations -ōh and -ō̧- had an entirely different development in the dialects north of the Humber. Here as in the paragraph above it is also necessary to distinguish between the final and the medial position :—

(*a*) Final -ōh, generally written -ō̧, -o̧gh, remained until about the end of the thirteenth century, and then became -ūgh (= ūχ), although the old spelling was mostly preserved, see § 55, as bōgh, enōgh, plōgh, slōgh *he slew*, &c.

(*b*) Medial -ō̧- became üu through the intermediate stage o̧u (cp. § 55) and was generally written ou (ow), and then in the fifteenth century the üu became iu by the unrounding of the first element, and was generally written ew (cp. § 116), as pl. bowes, enowe, plowes, slowen, &c., later bewes, enewe, plewes, slewen, &c.

(*c*) Then new uninflected forms were often made by levelling out the ew (= iu) of the inflected forms, as bew, enew, plew, slew, beside the older forms bōgh, &c.

iu

§ 116. The chief source of early ME. iu (written iw) is OE. ī + w, as sniwen (OE. snīwan) *to snow*, spiwen (OE. spīwan) *to spew, vomit*, stiward (OE. stīweard older stigweard) *steward*, Tiwesdai (OE. Tīwes dæg) *Tuesday*. But after ȩu had become iu about the end of the thirteenth century (§ 112) the iw came to be written ew in the above and similar words, as snewen, spewen, steward, Tewesdai.

§ 117. In the southern dialects of the south-western area ȩ̄, ǭ initially and after initial h- became the rising diphthongs ʒȩ̄, wǭ, written ʒe- ye-, wo-, who-, in the latter part of the fourteenth century, as ʒȩ̄r yȩ̄r beside ȩ̄re *ear* in the other dialects, and similarly ʒȩ̄rb yȩ̄rb *herb*, ʒȩ̄si yȩ̄si *easy*, ʒȩ̄ven yȩ̄ven *even* ; whǭl beside hǭl, hāl *sound, whole*, in the other dialects, wǭld beside ǭld, āld *old* in the other dialects, and

similarly whǫm *home*, whǫt *hot*, wǫn *one*, wǫtes *oats*.
And the rising diphthongs in the above and similar words
have been preserved in the modern dialects of this area, see
Index to *ED. Gr.*

(6) The Monophthongization of ME. Diphthongs.

§ 118. In parts of the Midlands, especially the south
Midlands, and the South, early ME. antevocalic ẹ͡ɜ became ī
(mostly written y) through the intermediate stage ī͡ɜ in the
second half of the thirteenth century, see § 107, 6, as īe, ȳe
(late OE. ēge older ēage) *eye*, flīen, flȳen (OE. flēogan,
Anglian flēga(n)) *to fly*, dīen, dȳen (late OE. dēgian) *to dye*,
and similarly dīen *to die*, sīen *they saw*, tīen *to tie*, &c.

§ 119. Final and anteconsonantal eigh from OE. ēh
became īgh in some of the southern dialects, see § 109, as
hīgh beside heigh *high*, and similarly hīghte *height*, nīgh
nigh, near, slīgh *sly*.

§ 120. In the dialects south of the Humber ME. ante-
vocalic ǫu from OE. -ō͡ɜ- became ū, written ou, ow (§ 9) in
the second half of the thirteenth century, see § 114, 2 (*b*), as
pl. bowes (OE. bōgas) *boughs*, and similarly pl. inowe
enough, drowen *they drew*, plowes *ploughs*, slowen *they
slew*, &c.

§ 121. In many Scottish dialects, e. g. Barbour's dialect,
the diphthongs ai, oi, ui (= Anglo-Norman ui for older ǫi),
of whatever origin, became ā, ǭ, ū in the latter part of the
fourteenth century, although the ai, oi, ui were very often
retained in writing. This led to the i being regarded as the
sign of long vowels, and then old long vowels also came to
have i written after them to indicate that they were long, as
mair = mār *more*, seik = sẹk *sick*, boik buik = būk *book*
(§ 55). Examples are : fār beside fair (OE. fæger, § 106)
fair, hāl beside hail (OE. hagol) *hail*, mā beside mai (OE.
mæg) *he may*, rāss beside raiss (ON. reisa) *to raise*, trātour

beside **traitour** (O.Fr. acc. traitor), **chǫss** beside **choiss**
(O.Fr. **chois**) *choice*, **jǫ** beside **joi** (O.Fr. **joie**) *joy*, **vǫce**
beside **voice**, **pūnt** beside **puint** *point*, **pūsoune** beside
puisoune (mod. northern dialects **puizn**) *poison*.

(7) Fusion.

§ 122. Fusion arose from the merging together of OE. ĭ,
y̆ (= ŭ̈) + palatal ӡ and ŭ + guttural ӡ after the ӡ had been
vocalized to i‑ and u‑consonant (cp. §105, 2). The fusion of
ĭ + ӡ took place partly in late OE. and partly in early ME.,
but the fusion of y̆ + ӡ and ŭ + ӡ did not take place until the
early ME. period. Examples are :—

1. OE. i + ӡ became ī, also written ȳ, as **nīne** (OE. nigon)
nine, **līest lȳest** (OE. ligest) *thou liest down*, and similarly
stī *pig-sty*, **stīle** *stile*, **tīle** *tile*.

2. OE. ī + ӡ became ī, as **stīen stȳen** (OE. stigan) *to
ascend*, **wī** (OE. wīg) *battle*, and similarly **Frīdai** *Friday*,
hīen hȳen *to hie, hasten* ; **twīes** (OE. twĭga + adverbial gen.
ending ‑es), Orm **twigess twiggess** *twice*, and similarly
þrīes *thrice*.

3. OE. y (§ 49) + ӡ became **üi, ī**, as **lüie, līe, lȳe** (OE.
lyge) *a lie*, and similarly **büiest, bīest, bȳest** *thou buyest*,
rüie, rīe, rȳe *rye*.

4. OE. ȳ (§ 57) + ӡ became **üi, ī**, as **drüie, drīe, drȳe**
(OE. **drȳge**) *dry*, **büien, bīen** (OE. bīegan, later **bȳgan,
bīgan**) *to bend*.

5. OE. u + ӡ became **ū**, later written **ou, ow** (§ 9), as pl.
mouen, mowen (OE. *mugon) *they may*, **fūel, fou(e)l** (OE.
fugol) *bird, fowl*, and similarly ·ӡūþ ӡouþ *youth*, **sow(e)** (OE.
sugu) *sow*.

6. OE. ū + ӡ became **ū**, later written **ou, ow**, as **büen
bouen bowen** (OE. būgan) *to bend, bow*, **trūen trouen
trowen** (OE., Anglian trŭgian) *to trust*.

(8) Other Dependent Changes.

§ 123. The initial **wur-** in the late OE. combination **wur** + consonant from older **wyr** + consonant (*EOE. Gr.* § 63) was generally written **wor-** in ME., as **worchen, wurchen** (early OE. **wyrcan**) *to work*, and similarly **worm, wurm ; worse, wurse ; wort, wurt** *root*.

§ 124. The initial combination **wim-** became **wum-** (also written **wom-**) in early ME., as **wum(m)an** (OE. **wimman** older **wifman**) *woman*, although the old writing with **wim-** was often retained.

§ 125. In those parts of the country where OE. **y** remained in early ME. (§ 49) the **ü** about the beginning of the thirteenth century became **u** (often written **o**, § 9) before **š** (= sch), **tš** (= ch in chin), **ltš, ntš**, and **dž** (= the j in just), as **bluschen** (OE. **blyscan**) *to blush*, **crucche** (OE. **crycc**) *crutch*, **muchel** later **much(e)** (OE. **mycel**) *much*, **unche** beside **inche** (OE. **ynce**) *inch*, **cuggel** (OE. **cycgel**) *cudgel*, and similarly **rusche, þrusche, wusch** *wish* ; **clucchen, kuchən** *kitchen*, **swuche** later **suche, whuch** *which* ; **brugge** *bridge*, **rugge** *ridge*.

§ 126. The **ü** in the above area also became **u** in the neighbourhood of consonants which favoured rounding, viz. after labials and **sch**, before **r** and especially between such sounds as **burþen burden** (OE. **byrþen**) *burden*, **churche** (OE. **cyrice, cirice**) *church*, **gurdel** (OE. **gyrdel**) *girdle*, **schuttel** (OE. **scytel**) *shuttle*, and similarly **churn, hurdel, hurst** *copse*, **schutten**, &c., see Luick, *Hist. Gr.* § 397.

§ 127. Before and after certain consonants **e** became **i** in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in the North and some parts of the Midlands, especially the east and south-east Midlands, as **briþren** (mod. dialects **briðə(r)z**) beside **breþren**, and similarly **brist** *breast*, **bristen** *to burst*, **ȝit** *yet*, **linþ(e)** *length* (cp. § 263), **prist** *priest* (cp. § 97), **rist** (mod.

F

dialects **rist, rust)** *rest,* **strinþ(e)** *strength* (cp. § 263), **togidre** *together* (cp. § 99).

§ 128. Postconsonantal **wǫ** from OE. **wā** (§ 51) became **wǭ** in a great part of the Midlands in the thirteenth century, as **twǭ** (OE. **twā**) *two,* **whǭ** (OE. **hwā**) *who,* and similarly **swǭpen** *to sweep,* **swǫt** *sweat,* **wǫmb** (cp. § 72).

§ 129. ME. **e**, of whatever origin, became **a** before **r** belonging to the same syllable in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, although the **e** was very often retained in writing, as **marre** (OE. **merran**) *to mar,* **starte** (ON. **sterta**) *to start,* and similarly **harvest, yard** *rod, staff;* **farre** older **ferre** (OE. **feorr**) *far,* and similarly **dark, harte** *heart,* **starre** *star,* **starve** *to die* ; **darling** (early OE. **dēorling,** later **deor-ling**), and similarly **farþing, starbord** ; **parsoun** (O.Fr. **persone**) *person, parson,* and similarly **sarve** *to serve,* **sarvise, warre** *war,* &c.

§ 130. **ri** in the combination consonant + **ri** + dental became **ir** (**ur**) in the early part of the fifteenth century, as **bird burd** beside older **brid** *bird,* **birne** *to burn,* **birste** *to burst,* beside **burne, burste, Cursmas** (mod. n. dialects **kǝsmǝs**) beside older **Cristes messe** *Christmas,* **dirt durt,** older **drit, þirde þurde,** older **þridde** (OE. **þridda**) *third.*

§ 131. During the ME. period **i** was probably lowered in closed syllables, especially before and after labials, liquids, and nasals, to a mid-mixed-narrow vowel like the **e** in German **gabe.** It was often written **e**, especially in the Midland and northern dialects, and in some dialects it became a full mid-front-wide vowel like the **e** in standard NE. **set,** as is shown by its development in the modern dialects, e. g. in the south of Scotland, n.Nhb., n.Cum., Dor. and w.Som., see *ED. Gr.* § 68. Examples are: **bigenne(n)** *to begin,* **fenger, leppis** *lips,* **reng** *ring,* **sweftli, wekked** *wicked,* **welle** *will,* **wemmen** *women.* What is written **i** often rhymes with **e** from the thirteenth century onwards, as **childre : eldre, stille : telle,** &c.

§ 132. e became i during the ME. period before **nk, ng,** palatal **ng** (= ndž) and ntš, as þinken (OE. þencan) *to think,* **flingen** (ON. **flengja**) *to fling,* inglisch (OE. englisc) *English,* **singen** (OE. **sengan**) *to singe,* drinchen beside drenchen (OE. **drencan**) *to drown,* and similarly **link, winge** (ON. **vængr**) *wing.*

§ 133. The o which arose from older ǫ before ng (§ 74) became u (generally written o, § 9) during the ME. period in the west Midland dialects, and the u-sound or its further development has been regularly preserved in the modern dialects of this area, and has even spread to other areas, see *ED. Gr.* § 32. Examples are: **amonge, long, mongere** *merchànt,* **song, strong, tonge** *a pair of tongs,* **þrong, wrong,** of which **amonge** and **mongere** have crept into standard NE.

CHAPTER IV

THE ME. DEVELOPMENT OF THE OE. VOWELS OF UNACCENTED SYLLABLES

1. THE WEAKENING OF VOWELS IN UNACCENTED SYLLABLES.

§ 134. One of the characteristic differences between OE. and ME. is the weakening of the OE. vowels to e in un-accented syllables, and its eventual disappearance in most cases. The weakening of **a, o, u** to e had begun to take place in late OE., and final -i had already become -e in the seventh century. It is impossible to determine what was the precise quality of this e. In final syllables it must have been a kind of ə-sound and have varied in quality according to the nature of the surrounding sounds something like the a in standard NE. **china, cathedral.** This no doubt accounts for its being sometimes written i, u. These variations in writing were common from the end of the thirteenth century; the u was especially common in the

west Midland dialects and the i in the northern dialects.
Examples in final syllables are :—

(*a*) When final, as sǫne (OE. sōna) *soon*, eiȝte (OE.
eahta) *eight*, nom. sing. of masc. n-stems, as dogge (OE.
dogga) *dog*, the ending of the gen. pl. of nouns and
adjectives, as stǫne (OE. stāna), gǭdre (OE. gōdra), the
comparative of adjectives, as gretter(e) (OE. grīetra)
greater, dat. sing. of u-stems, as sune (OE. suna). Nom.
sing. of wa-, wō-stems, as bāle (OE. bealu, -o) *evil*, schāde
(OE. sceadu, -o) *shadow*, nom. sing. of short ō-stems, as
tāle (OE. talu) *tale, number*, nom. acc. sing. of short
u-stems, as sune sone (OE. sunu) *son* ; OE. gearu, -o
ready, pl. gearwe regularly became ȝare, ȝarwe, and then
from the latter was formed a new singular ȝaru, and
similarly buru *burrow*, holu *hollow*, naru *narrow*, schadu
shadow, soru *sorrow*, &c., see § 241. Nom. sing. of masc. ja-
stems, as ende (OE. ende), nom. acc. sing. of short i-stems,
as dęne *valley*, spęre *spear* (OE. dene, spere), nom. sing.
of fem. n-stems, as tunge (OE. tunge) *tongue*, nom. acc. pl. of
strong adjectives, as blĭnde (OE. blinde), &c.

(*b*) In final syllables ending in a consonant, as nom. acc.
pl. of masc. a-stems, as stǫnes (OE. stānas), acc. gen. dat.
sing. and nom. acc. pl. of masc. and fem. n-stems, as
doggen (OE. doggan), tungen (OE. tungan), the inf. of
strong and weak verbs, as helpen, dęlen, māken (OE.
helpan, dǣlan, macian), ending of the second and third
pers. sing. of the present of the second class of weak verbs,
as mākest, mākeþ (OE. macast, macaþ), the ending of the
pres. plural of strong and weak verbs, as helpeþ, mākeþ
(OE. helpaþ, maciaþ). hęved later hęd (OE. hēafod) *head*,
sadel (OE. sadol), brōþer, mǭder (OE. brōþor, mōdor),
superlative of adjectives gladest (OE. gladost), pp. of the
second class of weak verbs, as māked (OE. macod) *made*,
the pret. pl. of strong and weak verbs, as bounden, mākeden
(OE. bundun, -on, macodun, -on), the dat. pl. of nouns and

adjectives, stǫnen, tungen, blĭnden (early OE. stānum, tungum, blindum, late OE. ‑un, ‑on, ‑an § 259), here the ending ‑en mostly disappeared in early ME.

From the examples given in (*a*) and (*b*) it will be seen that the OE. stem-formative or inflexional endings ‑a, ‑an, ‑as, ‑ast, ‑aþ; ‑ol, ‑on, ‑or, ‑ost; ‑u, ‑um (see § 259), ‑un all became in ME. ‑e, ‑en, ‑es, ‑est, ‑eþ; ‑el, ‑en, ‑er, ‑est; ‑e, ‑en.

(*c*) In medial syllables, as gen. sing. **hevenes** (OE. **heofones**), pret. sing. **māked(e)**, pl. **māked(en)** (OE. **macode, macodun, ‑on**), &c.

2. The Development of ME. Svarabhakti Vowels in Final Syllables.

§ 135. In late OE. or early ME. the vocalic nasals and l developed an e before them and then became consonantal, as **bǫsem** (OE. **bōsm**) *bosom,* **hasel** (OE. **hæsl**) *hazel shrub,* **sweven** (OE. **swefn**) *dream,* and similarly **blossem, botem, hūsel** *Eucharist,* **setel** *seat,* **tǫken** *token,* &c.

§ 136. Final ‑els became ‑eles, as **birieles berieles bürieles** (OE. **byrgels**) *tomb,* and similarly **rę̄cheles rękeles** *incense,* **rędeles rędeles** *riddle,* &c.

§ 137. In late OE. and early ME. a vowel was developed between r and a following gutteral spirant, as ME. nom. sing. **buruȝ** (OE. **burug, buruh** beside **burg, burh**), inflected form **burǫwe** (with w from older ȝ, § 105), from which a new nom. sing. **burǫugh** was formed, and similarly **furǫugh, holǫugh** *hollow,* **marǫugh** *marrow,* **sorǫw(e)** *sorrow,* &c., cp. *EOE. Gr.* § 102.

8. The Weakening of Vowels in Syllables with a Secondary Accent.

§ 138. The vowel in suffixal and derivative syllables was generally weakened to e just as in the inflexional syllables, but in some suffixal and derivative syllables which had

a secondary accent the vowel was not weakened to e. This was especially the case with derivatives in -dŏm, -ĕr(e) (denoting *nomina agentis*), -fast, -fǫld (-fāld), -ful, -hǫde (-hȩde), -i (older -ī = OE. -ig), -ing, -isch, -lȩs (OE. -lēas), -lĭche, -ling, -lok (OE. -lāc), -schipe, -sum, -ung, and -ward. The long vowels in the above were shortened during the ME. period.   Examples are :—

kinedŏm, wisdŏm; bākĕre (OE. bæcĕre), drinkĕr(e) (OE. drincĕre) ; stĕdefast (OE. stedefæst) ; Orm ānfāld (OE. ānfeald) ; þankful (OE. þancfull) ; chīldhǫde, -hȩde (OE. cildhād) ; bodi, hǫli hāli (OE. bodig, hālig), hȩring (OE. hǣring) *herring*, englisch (OE. englisc), faderlȩs, hǫmlȩs (OE. fæderlēas, hāmlēas) ; hevenlĭch(e) (OE. heofonlĭc) *heavenly*; schilling (OE. scilling) ; wedlŏk (OE. wedlāc) ; frendschipe (OE. frĕondscipe) ; langsum longsum (OE. langsum) *tedious* ; chȩpung (OE. cēapung) *trading*; afterward (OE. æfterward).

The OE. ending -ende of the present participle became -and(e) in the North (probably of ON. origin, O.Icel. -ande), -end(e) in the Midlands, but ind(e) in the south-west Midlands, and -ind(e) in the South, as helpand(e), helpend(e), helpind(e) *helping*.

4. The Loss of Final -e.

§ 139. The loss of final -e took place at various periods and under various conditions, e. g. it ceased to be pronounced much earlier in the North than in the South, and much earlier in unaccented than in accented words, but it is only possible to fix approximate dates for its loss. This is in a great measure due to the laxity in the metrical construction of much of the ME. poetry and to the great conservatism exhibited by some of the best poets. The importance attached to metre and rhyme is sometimes exaggerated. What the student of the English language wants to know is not so much what poets like Orm, Chaucer, Barbour, &c.,

wrote in their metre, as how they actually pronounced their words in speaking. Good metre is always a valuable auxiliary aid in helping to confirm results which have been arrived at by other means, but when it is used as the chief or sole means for arriving at results, we are merely making use of what might be called letter-language instead of spoken language.

§ 140. In treating the history of final ·e in ME. it is important to remember that a large number of ME. words have a final ·e which did not belong to such words in OE., the e of the inflected forms having been levelled out into the uninflected forms, as bāre (OE. bær, pl. bare), brīde (OE. brȳd), chẹpe (OE. cēap), cǫle (OE. col, gen. coles), lǫre (OE. lār), nẹdle nẹdle (OE. nǣdl, nēdl), sẹke (OE. sēoc) *sick*, tīde (OE. tīd), &c., see § 103. This final ·e had the same further development in ME. as in words with final ·e from OE. ·a, ·e, ·o, ·u.

§ 141. The final ·e disappeared or rather ceased to be pronounced earlier in dissyllabic forms with a short stem-syllable than in those with a long stem-syllable, as in bitẹ (OE. bite) *bite, bit,* sunẹ sonẹ (OE. sunu), beside nẹdle nẹdle, tīde. In both categories of words the ·e continued to be written long after it had ceased to be pronounced. In late ME. the ·e in dissyllabic forms with a short stem-syllable was generally omitted in writing, as in bit, son, but in dissyllabic forms with a long stem-syllable it was generally retained in writing to indicate that the preceding vowel was long. It ceased to be pronounced earliest in the Scottish and northern dialects, later in the Midland dialects, and latest of all in the southern dialects, especially the Kentish dialect. In all the dialects it disappeared in pronunciation earlier in nouns and verbs than in adjectives, and earlier in the strong than in the weak declension of adjectives.

In the Scottish and northern dialects it had ceased to be

pronounced in all forms by about the middle of the thirteenth century.

In the Midland dialects it had ceased to be pronounced in all forms by about the middle of the fourteenth century, but the loss of final -e in pronunciation began in some parts of this large area at a much earlier date. Already in the *Ormulum* (about 1200) it was often unpronounced when the next word in the same sentence began with a vowel, in the dat. sing. of strong nouns and adjectives, and in the imperative singular of verbs. In the poetry of the fourteenth century it had become optional to retain or omit the final -e in most forms. But the full process of its loss in pronunciation was not completed until about one hundred years later than in the Scottish and northern dialects.

As Chaucer (1340–1400) is by far the most important ME. poet it will be useful to give here a brief summary of his retention and omission of the final -e. It should, however, be remembered that he was a very conservative poet, and that consequently his metrical forms are no sure guarantee of how he actually pronounced such forms in his spoken language. In his poetry the final -e was generally pronounced in dissyllabic forms with a long stem-syllable at the end of the line, but was often not pronounced in other positions. It was not pronounced in the following categories of forms :—In the pp. of strong verbs when the final -n had disappeared, as comę, drivę, stǫlę ; in the second pers. sing. of the preterite of strong verbs, as bę̄rę, tǭkę, &c. ; in nouns with a short stem-syllable, as sonę, wonę *custom*, and also in the dat. singular of such nouns. It was generally pronounced in the following categories :—In the plural of attributive adjectives, and in the infinitive of verbs, as bę̄re, mᾰke. It was sometimes pronounced and sometimes omitted in the following categories :—It was often omitted in the present indicative and the imperative, more seldom in the present subjunctive, and sometimes in the syncopated

forms of the singular and plural of the preterite of weak verbs. It was omitted in nouns with a short stem-syllable, but rarely in nouns with a long stem-syllable. In the dat. singular of nouns ending in a consonant it was generally omitted in pronunciation. It was often unpronounced in the singular of the weak declension of adjectives.

In the southern dialects the final ·e ceased to be pronounced in all forms in the second half of the fourteenth century.

§ 142. The loss of final ·e in trisyllabic forms can only be partially treated here as we shall have to return to it when dealing with ·e· in medial syllables (§§ 153–4). It began to disappear in early ME. when the first syllable was long and the second syllable had a secondary accent, but the secondary accent in the second syllable remained longer in some types of words than in others, and in poetry the final ·e often continued to be pronounced until the fifteenth century, whence such double forms as frendschipe, heiȝliche *highly*, siknesse, pl. wurþie *worthy*, beside frendschip, heiȝlich, sikness, wurþi. This explains why the final ·e disappeared so early in the inflected forms of dissyllabic adjectives, as pl. lęred *learned*, wurþi. The ·e regularly remained in early ME. in verbs of the type lovęde (OE. lufode), cp. § 153, but in verbs of the type mākede (OE. macode) it only remained for a time through the influence of dissyllabic preterites like dęmde (OE. dēmde) *he judged*, hĕrde (OE. hierde, hērde) *he heard*, cp. § 153.

5. The Loss of e in Final Syllables ending in a Consonant.

§ 143. Endings like ·es, ·ed were in some dialects written ·is (·ys), -id (·yd), ·us, ·ud, see § 134, and Chaucer sometimes used these i-endings for the sake of rhyme.

§ 144 e disappeared in early ME. between a diphthong and a following liquid or nasal, as **drawn** beside older

drawen, draȝen (OE. dragen) *drawn*, fain (OE. fægen) *joyful*, fair (OE. fæger) *beautiful*, seil (OE. segel, segl) *sail*, and similarly hail, fǫur *four*, pp. lein lain, leir *lair*, main *power*, awn ǫwn *own*, rein *ruin*, pp. slein slain, tail, wain *wagon*.

§ 145. e also disappeared in early ME. in the combination vowel + e + consonant, as foul from older fuwel fuȝel (OE. fugol) *bird, fowl* (§ 122), twīs *twice*, þrīs *thrice*, beside older twīes, þrīes.

§ 146. -es. This ending occurs in the gen. sing. of the strong declension of nouns and adjectives and in the plural of nouns except the weak declension, in adverbial genitives, in the second and third pers. singular and the plural of the present in the northern dialects. In the northern and north Midland dialects the e began to be syncopated in the early part of the fourteenth century and this process was completely carried out by the end of the century, as dai(e)s, wai(ε)s, clāþ(e)s ; adv. ell(e)s *else*, ǫns *once* ; verbs, as cum(e)s com(e)s, bēr(e)s, &c. When unsyncopated forms are found after the above date in monuments belonging to the Scottish and northern dialects, they are due to the imitation of Chaucerian forms. The syncope in nouns and adjectives took place much later in the Midland and southern dialects.

§ 147. -en. This ending occurs in the weak declension of nouns and adjectives, in the infinitive, in the past participle of strong verbs, in the present plural of the subjunctive, in the preterite plural of strong and weak verbs, and in the Midland dialects in the present plural of the indicative. The final -n in some of these categories disappeared during the OE. period in the northern dialects. The final -n also generally disappeared early in the southern dialects, but see §. 247. After the loss of the final -n the e also gradually disappeared. When preceded by a diphthong the e was regularly syncopated in the infinitive, as lein leyn *to lay*, sein seyn *to say*. It was also syncopated between r–n, and

l–n in the past participle of strong verbs, as bǫrn, tǫrn, stǫln, and also between a diphthong and the n, as pp. slain slayn (OE. slægen) *slain*, see § 144.

§ 148. -er. This ending chiefly occurs in the comparative of adjectives. The OE. ending was -ra. In passing from OE. to ME. the glide vowel e was developed between a preceding consonant and the r which gave in early ME. the ending -ere. And then the final -e disappeared, whence the ordinary ME. ending -er, as OE. grīetra = ME. gretter, OE. brādra = ME. brāder brǫder·; and similarly with the ending of the gen. plural of strong adjectives (OE. -ra), cp. Chaucer oure aller cok, alderbest, alderfirst.

§ 149. -est. This ending occurs chiefly in the superlative of adjectives, and corresponds to the OE. ending -est(a), -ost(a). In ME. the -e- was never syncopated.

§ 150. -est, -eþ. These endings occur in the second and third pers. sing. of the present indicative, for the plural ending -eþ, see below. Here a distinction must be made between the different dialects. In the OE. period syncope was general in the strong verbs in WS. and Kentish, but in the Anglian dialects the forms without syncope were almost entirely generalized. This distinction was also preserved in the ME. period, that is, syncope regularly took place in the southern dialects, but generally not in the Midland dialects, and not at all in the northern dialects. In the Midland dialects syncope was far more common after long than after short stems. Chaucer has double forms in the third pers. singular, as comþ, mākþ, lovęþ, beside comeþ, mākeþ, loveþ. Syncope did not take place in any of the dialects in the second pers. sing. of the second class of weak verbs, as lovest, lǫkest, OE. lufast, lōcast. The e in the ending -eþ of the plural of the present indicative was never syncopated in the southern dialects.

§ 151. -ed. This ending of the pp. of weak verbs corresponds to the OE. endings -ed, -od. The -ed regularly

remained in ME., but there are many new formations which were formed direct from the ME. preterite. Regular forms were : **māked** (OE. macod), **kiþed** (OE. cȳþed) *made known*, **wēred** (OE. wered) *defended*, &c. New formations were: **hĕrd** (OE. hīered, hēred) : **hĕrde, maad** : **māde**, beside the regular form **māked, clept** : **clepte**, beside the regular form **clēped**.

6. The Development of ME. Svarabhakti Vowels in Medial Syllables.

§ 152. Many words which were dissyllabic in OE. became trisyllabic in ME. through the development of a glide vowel between a consonant and a following liquid, nasal or **w** :—

1. An **e** was developed about 1200 in the combination open voiced consonant + a liquid or nasal in dissyllabic forms with shortening of a preceding long vowel, as **breþeren** beside older **brēþren**, pl. **develes** beside older **dēvles, evere** (OE. æfre) *ever*, **slumeren** *to slumber*.

2. An **o** was developed between a liquid and a following **w** from older **ȝ** (§ 298), as **borǫwen** beside older **borȝen** (OE. borgian) *to borrow*, and similarly **folǫwen, halǫwen** *to hallow*, **morǫwe** *morrow*.

7. The Loss or Retention of Medial and Final **e** in Trisyllabic Forms.

§ 153. It is necessary to distinguish between trisyllabic forms with a short stem-syllable and those with a long stem-syllable. When the stem-syllable was short the medial **e** regularly disappeared, and when it was long the final **·e** disappeared. This loss of the medial or final e began to take place in early ME. Examples with short stem-syllables are : **þanne þonne** (OE. þanone) *thence*, pl. **fadres** (OE. fæderas), gen. and dat. sing. **watres, watre** (OE. wæteres, wætere),

pl. develes, hevenes, pl. munkes monkes (OE. munecas) from which was formed a new singular munk monk, and similarly hemp, mint *coin*, &c. The forms with syncope are very common in the *Ormulum*, as pl. effne beside sing. efenn, gaddrenn, niþþrenn *to humble*, oppnenn, wattrenn, gen. werrldess beside nom. werelld *world*, but even in the *Ormulum* we occasionally find new formations, especially in the preterite of weak verbs, as lufede, oppnede, &c. ; in fact forms of the type lufde were rare in ME., because the medial e was mostly preserved through the influence of the e in the past participle. It should be noted that the medial e in preterites like havede (OE. hæfde), livede (OE. lifde) was never pronounced in the spoken language. Examples with long stem-syllable are : pl. helpers, maiden(e)s beside the new formation maidnes, pret. māked (OE. macode), lōked (OE. lōcode), but preterites of the type lōked, māked preserved the final ·e for a time through the influence of dissyllabic preterites like demde, hĕrde, cp. § 142. During the ME. period the above sound-laws became to some extent obliterated through analogical formations in both directions. In the northern dialects the loss of the final ·e in forms with a short stem-syllable became more general. In the southern dialects the loss of the medial e in forms with a long stem-syllable became more general. In Chaucer double forms are sometimes found side by side, as werede beside wered, clepte beside cleped. The trisyllabic forms are very rare in late ME. poetry.

§ 154. In trisyllabic forms containing a secondary accented syllable it is necessary to distinguish whether the secondary accent was on the second or on the third syllable. When it was on the second the final ·e regularly disappeared, but when it was on the third the medial e disappeared. Examples of the former are : *Ormulum* allmess (OE. ælmesse) *alms*, laffdiȝ (OE. hlǽfdige) *lady*, frendschip, heiȝlich, sikness, beside older frendschipe, &c., see § 142. This explains

why adjectives like **englisch, hǫli, riȝtfull, wurþi,** &c., superlatives like **fairest, hardest,** derivatives in **-ung, -ing,** &c., remained uninflected in the oblique caseṣ. Examples of the latter are: **Frīdai** (OE. **Frīgedæg**), **kindom** (OE. **cynedōm**), **neighbour** older **nehhebour** (OE. **nēahgebūr**), **quinstrę** beside older **quinestrę** *quince-tree.* This syncope of medial **e** is not common in early ME., and in the *Ormulum* it does not take place at all, but at a later date numerous analogical formations are found.

8. The Treatment of Unaccented e in Polysyllabic Forms.

§ 155. In forms of the type x́xx̀x the medial e disappeared in the first instance and then with the loss of the secondary accent in the third syllable the final **-e** also disappeared, as **mínchène** (OE. **mynecenu**), later **mínchen** *nun,* **hérbèrwe** (OE. **hereberge**) later **hérber** *harbour, inn,* **wébstère** (OE. **webbestre**) with **-è-** due to the influence of **webbere,** later **wébster** *female weaver,* and similarly **bakster, dáisì(e)** *daisy,* **minter, sempster,** &c. Preterites like **gaderede, scaterede** and those of the type **ánswèrède, wítnèssède** preserved the stronger secondary accent and had the endings **-ede, -ed, -de** apparently used indiscriminately.

9. The Treatment of Vowels in Prefixes.

§ 156. In the treatment of prefixes it is necessary to distinguish between original nouns and adjectives on the one hand, and verbs on the other. In OE. as in the other Old Germanic languages original nouns and adjectives containing a prefix had the principal accent on the prefix. This rule was preserved in ME. and accordingly the prefixes generally underwent no change, cp. **after-ward** (OE. **æfter-weard**), **unfair** (OE. **unfæger**), &c. On the other hand in OE. as in the other old Germanic languages verbs containing an

inseparable prefix had the principal accent on the verbal element. This rule was also preserved in ME. with the result that prefixes containing a long vowel in OE. were shortened in ME., as abīden, arīsen = OE. ābīdan, ārīsan, to-brĕken = OE. tō-brecan *to break to pieces.* With the exception of OE. æt-, be-, ge-, of-, on-, ond-, the prefixes containing a short vowel generally underwent no change in ME., as forbĕren (OE. forberan) *to forbear,* fulfillen (OE. fulfyllan) *to fulfil,* mislīken (OE. mislīcian) *to displease,* undǫn (OE. undōn) *to undo.* æt- became at-, as athālden, -hǫlden *to withhold.* be- became bi-, as bicumen (OE. becuman), bihāten (OE. behātan) *to promise.* ge- became i- (also written y-) through the intermediate stages ʒi-, ī-, as iholpen (OE. geholpen), inǫugh (OE. genōg, genōh) *enough,* iwis̄ (OE. gewiss) *certain.* of-, on-, ond- became a-, as adoun (OE. ofdūne) *down,* aþirst (OE. ofþyrst) *thirsty,* abouten (OE. onbūtan) *about,* along (OE. ondlong, and-lang) *along.*

10. The Treatment of Unaccented Words.

§ 157. This subject has been partly dealt with under the shortening of long vowels, see § 101, and we shall have to return to it when dealing with the pronouns and auxiliary verbs. By referring to Chapter XI of the *EOE. Gr.* it will be seen that many of the pronouns had double forms in OE., and similarly in ME. we also have accented beside unaccented forms, as wĕ, ŭs, năt, nŏt beside nauʒt, nǫuʒt, ăn, ă beside ān, ǭn. Final -e disappeared in early ME. in unaccented forms, as ʒes *yes,* sǫn *soon,* þan (þen), whan (when), &c., beside the accented forms ʒese, sǭne, þanne (þenne), whanne (whenne), &c. ; in the inflected forms of words like ān, mīn, þīn, &c., and also between l or n, and s in final syllables, as els *else,* hens *hence,* sins *since,* whens *whence,* beside older elles, hennes, sinnes (siþnes),

whennes. The -e in the def. article often disappeared when the next word began with a vowel, as þende *the end*, þōþre *the other*. This elision of the e has become generalized both before vowels and consonants in all the modern English dialects from Northumberland to Nottinghamshire, that is, it has become þ (never ð) or t, see *ED. Gr.* § 312.

CHAPTER V

THE SCANDINAVIAN AND FRENCH ELEMENTS IN ME.

1. THE SCANDINAVIAN ELEMENT IN ME.

§ **158.** This is a wide and important subject and at the same time a difficult subject, because of the very large number of words which were entirely alike or nearly alike in the Old English and Old Scandinavian languages. And we should now be unable to tell from which language they came if we had no English records before the invasions of the Scandinavians took place. The consequence was that an Englishman in those days would have no greater difficulty in understanding a Viking than a Yorkshire dialect speaker would have in understanding a Somersetshire peasant of to-day. And we even possess historical evidence that the old Scandinavians looked upon the English language as one with their own. In Chapter VII of the *Saga of Gunnlaugr Ormstunga* it is stated that there was at that time (eleventh century) 'the same tongue in England as in Norway and Denmark'.

§ **159.** The Scandinavian loan-words found their way into English in different strata and at different periods, which in some measure accounts for the same word appearing in various forms in ME., as ğauk, gǫwk, gōk *cuckoo*,

laus, lǫus, lǭs *loose,* naut, nǫut *cattle,* &c. These periods may be conveniently divided into :—

1. From 787 to about 860. During this period the invaders merely made raids for the sake of plunder, and no loan-words worth mentioning came into the language.

2. From 860 to about 990. During this period a very large number of Scandinavians settled permanently in this country, and the foreign idiom was spoken over large tracts of the country.

3. From about 990 to 1016. This was a period of political conquest and of the importation of large numbers of loan-words into the language.

4. From 1013 to 1042 England was entirely under Danish rule. During this period English was spoken at Court, and by this time the foreign idiom had practically ceased to be spoken. An important factor which helped to bring about the complete fusion of the Scandinavian settlers and the English was the Norman Conquest in 1066, when both the Scandinavians and the English combined together to combat the invader.

5. From 1050 to 1150, when the English and Scandinavian peoples were completely merged together. This was the last and most important period of influx, and a very large number of loan-words found their way into the language during these years.

§ 160. The area over which the loan-words extended in OE. and ME. and still extends in the modern dialects was the northern, the north and east Midland counties down to East Anglia, and the north-western counties. The great bulk of the loan-words must have come into the language in the course of the tenth and especially the eleventh century, but they do not appear in great numbers in the literature until the ME. period. This was due to the fact that literature in late OE. was mainly written in the WS. dialect. We know that the Scandinavian influence was least of all in the

southern and south-western dialects, hence naturally very few loan-words would be found in the WS. dialect of the OE. period. Thus in Laȝamon's *Brut* (about 1205), the language of which keeps up much of the traditions of the WS. literature, there are very few Scandinavian words, while in the east Midland *Ormulum* (about 1200) the Scandinavian element is considerable, viz. about 250 such words.

§ 161. The number of Scandinavian loan-words in ME. must have been very much greater than what appears in ME. literature. This is proved by the fact that the modern dialects contain thousands of such words including all parts of speech. In this connexion we will only mention one important piece of evidence showing how great the Scandinavian element is in the modern dialects. In the modern dialects OE. initial sc· (= sk·) has become sh· in native words just as in the standard language, as shade, ship, &c., whereas in words of foreign origin it has remained in the dialects just as in the standard language, as scaffold, school, score, skill, skin, skirt, sky, &c. Now if we exclude all sc· words of various origins which are common to the standard language and the dialects, it is a remarkable fact that the *English Dialect Dictionary* contains 1,154 simple words beginning with sc· (sk·).

§ 162. In this connexion it is important to remember that the dialects spoken by the Scandinavian settlers had for a time a life of their own side by side with the English dialects, whilst the Scandinavians were still regarded by the English as foreigners. During this period of the existence of Scandinavian dialects spoken on English soil, owing to the intercourse between the two nations, fresh loan-words were being continually introduced into English, and then in the course of time the two languages gradually became merged into one which was chiefly English in form, but very rich in Scandinavian words. This process was in a great measure brought about by intermarriage between Scandinavian and English

families. That this was so is clearly seen by the large number of proper names of persons of Scandinavian origin which are found in late OE. and early ME. charters and documents, and by the large number of double forms with practically the same meaning, the one being Scandinavian and the other native English, as aȝe (awe) : eie *fear*, deilen : dęlen *to divide*, egg : eie (pl. eyren) *egg*, frā (frǭ) : fram *from*, garþ : ȝard *yard, garden*, grā : OE. grǣg, ME. grei *grey*, gayt : gāt, gǫt *goat*, heil : OE. hāl, ME. hāl, hǫl *sound, whole*, lagu : OE. ǣ *law*, lāten, lǫten : lęten, lęten (OE. lǣtan, lētan) *to let*, lǫupen : OE. hlēapan *to leap*, laus (lǫus) : OE. lēas *false, loose*, naut (nǫut) : OE. nēat *cattle*, scateren : schatern, skiften : schiften, sister : suster (OE. sweostor), swein : swān (swǭn) *servant*, NE. sky : heaven, trigg : OE. trēowe *fidelity*, þei : þā *those*, weik : OE. wāc *weak*, werre : worse, ępen : OE. wēpan *to cry*, &c.

§ 163. With these few preliminary remarks we shall now proceed to state the more important phonological criteria by which the Scandinavian element in ME. can easily be recognized, and shall, as a rule, only give such illustrative examples as are to be found in well-known ME. texts, such as the *Cursor Mundi* (1300), Richard Rolle de Hampole's *Pricke of Conscience* (about 1349), Barbour's *Bruce* (1375), the *Ormulum* (1200), *Genesis and Exodus* (about 1250), the *Lay of Havelok the Dane* (1300), Robert of Brunne's *Handlyng Synne* (1300-30), *Early English Alliterative Poems* (about 1350), &c. And it should be noted that the Scandinavian loan-words which came into ME. underwent all further sound-changes in common with the native words containing the same sounds. As Old Icelandic is the best representative of the Old Scandinavian languages the older illustrative examples are here taken from that language. When the OE. or ME. word comes first in the comparisons given in the following paragraphs, it means that the word is of native

origin, but of Scandinavian origin when the O.Icel. word comes first.

§ **164.** When a Scandinavian loan-word contained a short stem-vowel at the time it was borrowed we have no means of determining from the vowel alone whether the word was of Scandinavian or English origin, that is, the vowel fell together in sound with the corresponding OE. or early ME. vowel, as OE. **eall**, ME. **al(l)** = O.Icel. **all-r** *all*, OE. **dragan** = O.Icel. **draga** *to draw*, OE. **sealt**, ME. **salt** = O.Icel. **salt**, O.Icel. **taka** = OE. **tacan**, ME. **taken**, later **tāken**. O.Icel. **fela** = ME. **felen**, later **fẹlen** *to conceal*, O.Icel. **geta** = ME. **gẹten** beside the native form **·ʒẹten** *to get*, O.Icel. **hnefi** = ME. **neve**, later **nẹve** *fist*, O.Icel. **ketill** = OE. **cietel**, ME. **ketel**, OE. **sendan** = O.Icel. **senda** *to send*. O.Icel. **skinn** = OE. **scinn**, ME. **skin**, O.Icel. **hitta** = ME. **hitten** *to ·hit*. O.Icel. **oddi** = ME. **odde** *odd*, OE. **open**, ME. **open**, later **ǫpen** = O.Icel. **opinn**, O.Icel. **rottinn** = ME. roten *rotten*. OE. **sum** = O.Icel. **sum-r** *some*, OE. **tunge** = O.Icel. **tunga** *tongue*. O.Icel. **flytja** = ME. **flitten**, **flütten** *to flit, migrate*, OE. **cynn** = O.Icel. **kyn** *kin, kindred*, O.Icel. **stytta** from older *stynta = ME. **stinten**, **stenten**, **stünten** *to stint, stop*, see § **49**, O.Icel. **syster** = ME. **sister**.

§ **165.** From the examples of long vowels given below it will be seen that with the exception of Germanic **ǣ** (§ **52**) we have no means of determining from the long vowel alone whether the word containing it is of Scandinavian or English origin, as OE. **dœman**, **dēman**, ME. **dẹmen** = O.Icel. **dœma** *to judge*, OE. ME. **hēr** = O.Icel. **hēr** *here*, O.Icel. **sēr** = ME. **sẹr** *separately*, OE. **bītan**, ME. **bīten** = O.Icel. **bīta** *to bite*, O.Icel. **tīþinde** = ME. **tīþende** *tidings, news*, O Icel. **þrīfa·sk** = ME. **þriven** *to thrive*. OE. ME. **fōt** = O.Icel. **fōt-r** *foot*, O.Icel. **bōn** = ME. **bǫne** *request*, O.Icel. **rōt** = ME. **rǫte** *root*. OE. ME. **hūs** = O.Icel. **hūs** *house*, O.Icel. **būin·n** = ME. **boune** *ready*, O.Icel. **drūpa** = ME. **droupen** *to droop*. Pl. OE. **mȳs**, ME. **mīs**, **mēs**, **mūs** (§ **57**)

= O.Icel. mȳss *mice*, O.Icel. brȳnn = ME. brīn *eyebrow*,
O.Icel.·þrȳsta = ME. þrīsten, þrẹsten, þrŭsten *to thrust*.

§ 166. The treatment of Germanic ǣ is entirely different
in O.Icel. and OE. In O.Icel. it became ā, whereas in OE.
it became ē (= ME. ẹ) in the Anglian and Kentish dialects,
but remained in WS. Before nasals it became ō (= ME. ǭ)
in all the OE. dialects. In this case we have an excellent
test. If a ME. word is of Scandinavian origin it has ā, ǭ
(§ 51), if it is of English origin it has ẹ, ę (§ 52), and ǭ
before nasals, as O.Icel. grā·r = ME. grā, grǭ beside OE.
grǣg, ME. grei *grey*, O.Icel. hār = ME. hāre, hǭre beside
OE. hǣr, hēr, ME. hẹr, hęr *hair*, O.Icel. lāta = ME.
lāten, lǭten beside OE. lǣtan, lētan, ME. lẹten, lęten
to let, O.Icel. rāþa = ME. rāþen, rǭþen beside OE. rǣdan
to counsel, O.Icel. vāpn = ME. wāpen, wǭpen beside OE.
wǣpen *weapon*, O.Icel. vǭrom from older *vārum = ME.
wāren, wǭren beside OE. wǣron *we were*, and similarly
bāren, bǭren *we bore*, gāven, gǭven *we gave*, OE. mōna =
ME. mǭne = O.Icel. māne *moon*. A similar distinction ex-
isted in ME. when the O.Icel. ā corresponded to OE. ēa,
of whatever origin, as O.Icel. fā·r = ME. fā, fǭ beside OE.
fēawe, ME. fęwe *few*, O.Icel. flā = ME. flā(n), flǭ(n), beside
OE. flēan, ME. flẹ(n) *to flay*, O.Icel. slā = ME. slā(n), slǭ(n),
beside OE. slēan, ME. slẹ(n) *to slay*.

O.Icel. ār with ā from Germanic ai = ME. ār, ǭr beside
OE. ǣ from *airiz = ME. ẹr *earlier, formerly, before*.

§ 167. A good test as to whether a ME. form is of Scandi-
navian or native English origin is to be found in the treat-
ment of the Germanic diphthongs in the Scandinavian and
English languages, especially the diphthongs ai, au, and
the i·umlaut of the latter diphthong, as will be seen from the
table given below. It should be noted that in O.Icel. the
Germanic diphthong eu became a rising diphthong, viz.
jū before f, p, g, k, and jō in all other positions. At the
time, however, when Scandinavian loan-words came into

English the diphthong from Germanic **eu** must have been a falling diphthong, because it had the same development in ME. as OE. **ēo**, that is, it became **ę̄**, so that no further notice of it will be taken here.

Prim. Germ.	ai	au	eu	
O.Icel.	ei	au	jō (jū)	ey
ME.	ei(ai)	ǫu	ę̄	ei(ai)
OE.	ā	ēa	ēo	īe
ME.	ā(ǭ)	ę̄	ę̄	ī, ǖ, ę̄

§ 168. O.Icel. ei : bleik·r = ME. bleik, blaik beside OE. blāc, ME. blāk, blǫk *bleak*, freista = ME. freisten *to ask*, geit = ME. geit, gait beside OE. gāt, ME. gāt, gǫt *goat*, heil(l) = ME. heil, hail beside OE. hāl, ME. hāl, hǫl *sound, whole*, heiþin·n = ME. heiþen, haiþen beside the OE. mutated form hǣþen, ME. hęþen *heathen*, leika = ME. leiken, laiken beside OE. lācan *to play*, leiþ·r = ME. leiþ, laiþ beside OE. lāþ, ME. lāþe, lǫþe *loathsome*, nei = ME. nai, nay beside OE. nā, ME. nā, nǫ *no, nay*, steik = ME. steike *steak*, þei·r, þeir(r)a, þeim = ME. þei, þeire, þeim, NE. they, their, them beside OE. þā *those*, þāra (þǣra), þǣm (þām), veik·r = ME. weik, waik beside OE. wāc, ME. wāke, wǫke *weak*.

Note.— The **ei** in the above and similar words became **ai**, also written **ay**, about 1300 (§ 107), and then in the dialects south of the Humber the **ai** became **ę̄** before **k** about the end of the fourteenth century, as **wę̄k** beside older **weik waik** *weak*, and similarly **blę̄k** *bleak*, **stę̄k** *steak*.

§ 169. O.Icel. au : gaula = ME. gǫulèn, gaulen *to howl*, hlaupa = ME. lǫupen beside OE. hlēapan, ME. lę̄pen *to leap*, kaupa = ME. cǫupen beside OE. cēapian, ME. chę̄pen *to buy*, laus = ME. lǫus(e), lǫs *loose* beside OE. lēas, ME. lę̄s *false, untrue*, naut = ME. naut, nǫut beside OE. nēat, ME. nę̄te *cattle*, rauta· = ME. rǫuten *to bellow*. Cp. §§ 113 note, 159.

§ 170. O.Icel. ey: leysa = ME. leisen, laisen beside OE. (Anglian) lēsan, ME. lẹsen *to loosen* (see § 66), neyta = ME. naiten *to make use of*, treysta = ME. treisten, traisten beside OE. *trȳstan, ME. trĭsten, trŭsten *to trust*.

§ 171. In order to keep together the various criteria by which Scandinavian loan-words can be recognized in OE. and ME. we shall also include here the consonants.

§ 172. Initial w disappeared in early Old Scandinavian before ō, ŭ and l, whence forms like ōepa = ME. ẹpen beside OE. wēpan, ME. wẹpen from *wōpjan *to weep*, ōkr = ME. ōker beside OE. wōcor *usury*, orm·r *snake* = ME. proper name Orm, NE. Ormsby beside OE. wurm, wyrm *snake, worm,* leita = ME. leiten, laiten *to seek, look for,* beside OE. wlātian *to gaze.*

§ 173. Germanic đ remained in Old Scandinavian, but became d in prehistoric OE. (*EOE. Gr.* §§ 113, 133), whence O.Icel. garđ·r *enclosure, yard* = ME. garþ and many mod. n. dialects garth beside OE. geard, ME. ʒard, ʒerd *yard*, O.Icel. rāđa = ME. rāþen, rǭþen beside OE. rǣdan, rēdan, ME. rẹden, rẹden *to advise, counsel*, O.Icel. tīđinde = ME. tīþende, tīþinde beside ME. tīdende, tīdinde *tidings, news*: OE. tīd *time.*

§ 174. Old Scandinavian had no trace whatever of the palatalization of Germanic k when originally followed by a palatal vowel, whereas the k in this position became palatalized in prehistoric OE. (*EOE. Gr.* § 166), and then in late OE. or early ME. itbecame ass ibilated to tš, written ch, in all the dialects, see Hoops, *Wissenschaftliche Forsch-ungsberichte*, pp. 78-9, but in other positions it remained both in OE. and ME. Examples are: O.Icel. bekkr = ME. bek beside OE. bece, ME. beche *brook*, O.Icel. kirkja = ME. kirke, mod. n. dialects kirk beside OE. cir(i)ce, ME. chir(e)che *church*, O.Icel. kirna = mod. n. dialects kirn beside ME. chirne *churn*, O.Icel. kista = mod. n. dialects kĭst beside OE. cest, cist, ME. cheste, chiste *chest*, O.Icel.

dīki = ME. dīke beside OE. dīc, ME. dīch, NE. dike beside ditch, O.Icel. ketill = ME. ketel beside OE. cietel, ME. chetel *kettle*. But O.Icel. kald-r, early OE. ceald, cald, ME. cāld, cǫld *cold* (see § 71), O.Icel. kalla, late OE. ceallian, ME. callen *to call*, O.Icel. kenna, OE. cennan, ME. kennen from *kannjan *to know, recognize*. See § 285.

§ 175. Initial, medial, and final sk is a good test, because there can be no doubt that sk (sc) became sch in ME. native words, see § 161. Examples are: O.Icel. skel = mod. n. dialects skel beside OE. sciell, ME. schelle *shell*, O.Icel. skifta = ME. skiften, mod. n. dialects skift beside OE. sciftan, ME. schiften *to shift*, O.Icel. aska = ME. aske beside OE. asce, ME. asche *ashes*, fisk-r = ME. fisk (Orm pl. fisskess) beside OE. fisc, ME. fisch *fish*.

§ 176. The Germanic initial spirant ȝ became the explosive g in the Old Scandinavian languages, and also during the OE. period before guttural vowels, but remained in OE. before palatal vowels (*EOE. Gr.* § 168), whence we have O.Icel. g-, but OE. and ME. g- beside ȝ-, as O.Icel. gaf = ME. gaf beside OE. geaf, ME. ȝaf, ȝef *he gave*, O.Icel. gapa = ME. gāpen *to yawn, gape*, O.Icel. garn = ME. and many mod. dialects garn beside OE. gearn *yarn*, O.Icel. garð-r *enclosure, yard* = ME. garþ beside OE. geard, ME. ȝard, ȝerd *yard*. O.Icel. gat *hole, opening* = ME. gat, gāte (cp. § 292) beside OE. geat, ME. ȝat, ȝet, and many mod. dialects yat, yet *gate*, O.Icel. geta = ME. gēten *to get*, beside OE. only in compounds, as forgietan, ME. forȝēten *to forget*.

§ 177. Germanic medial ȝȝ, of whatever origin, became gg in the prehistoric period of all the Germanic languages, which in OE. became differentiated into palatal gg (written cg) and guttural gg under the same conditions as those by which Germanic k became differentiated into palatal and guttural k (§ 280). The guttural -gg remained in OE. and ME., but palatal gg became assibilated to dž (written gg) in

late OE. or early ME., as OE. **dogga**, ME. **dogge** *dog*, but
OE. **licgan**, ME. **liggen** (= *lidžen) *to lie down*. Examples
are : O.Icel. **bryggja** = ME. **brigge** and mod. n. and Midl.
dialects **brig** beside OE. **brycg**, ME. **brigge, brügge** *bridge*,
O.Icel. **eggja** = ME. **eggen** *to egg on*, O.Icel. **hrygg·r** = ME.
and many mod. dialects **rig** beside OE. **hrycg**, ME. **rigge,**
rügge *ridge, back*, O.Icel. **liggja** = ME. **liggen** and many
mod. dialects **lig** beside OE. **licgan**, ME. **liggen** *to lie down.*

2. THE FRENCH ELEMENT IN ME.

§ **178.** The French element which gained a permanent
footing in ME. was far greater in amount than the sum
total of all the other foreign elements, and it also differed
very materially in its nature from those elements. The
Scandinavian element consisted for the most part of every-
day words, such as would be used by the common people,
whereas the French element was largely composed of words
representing a higher culture or state of civilization than
either the Scandinavian or the native element, such as mili-
tary, ecclesiastical, legal, hunting, and heraldic terms. This
is accounted for by the fact that the Anglo-Normans belonged
to the upper classes, whereas the Scandinavians belonged
chiefly to the yeoman and agricultural classes. Hence it
may be said that the French or Anglo-Norman element
penetrated from the higher to the lower classes, whereas the
Scandinavian element penetrated from the lower to the
upper classes, in so far as such words were permanently
incorporated into the standard language.

§ **179.** As a result of the Norman Conquest French in
England had become the language of the Court, of the
nobility, of the clergy, and indeed of all who wished for
and sought advancement in Church or State. Robert of
Gloucester (1298) thus describes the important position of
French in the England of his day : ' Lo ! thus came England
into Normandy's hand and the Normans could then speak

nothing but their own tongue. They spoke French as they did at home, and taught their children to do likewise, so that men of high rank in the country, who are their descendants, keep to that same tongue, which they inherited from them, for unless a man knows French, he is little esteemed. But the lower ranks still keep to English, their own native tongue. I believe there is no country in all the world, save England only, that keeps not to its native speech. But one knows well, that it is good to be able to speak both, for the more knowledge a man has, the greater his worth,' see Morris and Skeat's *Specimens of Early English*, Part II, pp. 8–9. In the same volume (pp. 240–2) another interesting passage bearing on this subject is to be found in John of Trevisa's translation of Higden's *Poly-chronicon* (1387). He records how the English 'birth-tongue' has become 'impaired' by the admixture of too much French, for one reason because 'children in school, contrary to the usage and manner of all other nations, are compelled to neglect their own language and construe their lessons and hear things in French, and have done so, since the Normans came first into England'. But he goes on to tell us in an additional passage of his own authorship, that in the year of our Lord 1385 'in all the grammar schools of England, children neglect French, and construe and learn in English'.

§ 180. It has been estimated that the population of this country, including the Scandinavians, was about two millions at the time of the Norman Conquest, and that of these one-fourth were killed or otherwise disappeared during the Conqueror's reign, and that on the other hand at least 500,000 Frenchmen settled in England during his reign, so that there was for a time great danger lest the English language should be ousted by Norman-French. Had it not been for the strong infusion of -Scandinavian settlers in England at this period, whose influence would tend towards

the preservation of the kindred Germanic tongue, this danger would probably not have been averted.

§ 181. But the French element in ME. is not wholly Anglo-Norman, there was also a certain infusion of Central French, or, as it is sometimes termed, Parisian French. For some time Anglo-Norman prevailed, but gradually it came to be regarded as an inferior dialect of Old French, and already in the thirteenth century and onwards into the fourteenth century, the educated and upper classes began to learn and to speak Central French. And Anglo-Norman practically died out as a spoken language. This brought about the introduction of a large number of Central French words into the standard ME. of authors like Chaucer, Lydgate, &c. Nearly all the words introduced during the fifteenth century are from Central French. This admixture of the two French elements gave rise to many double forms in ME., the one being chiefly used by the lower and the other by the educated classes. And the difference between the forms manifested itself especially in the treatment of the vowels of unaccented syllables. Some of these differences are still reflected in the standard language and the dialects of the present day, as edjūkeit, edžūkeit : edikēt, -eət *educate,* fītšə : fiətə *feature,* kɒzn : kuzin *cousin,* væl-jū : valə vali *value,* &c.

§ 182. French was the language used in the Courts of Law until 1362, in which year it was decreed by an Act of Parliament that all pleadings in the Courts should henceforth be conducted in English, because, as is stated in the preamble to the Act, French was 'become much unknown in the realm'. But the mongrel French known as 'Law French' continued to exist for centuries later, and it was not finally abolished until 1731. The Proceedings in Parliament were recorded in French till 1483, when Richard III introduced a reform whereby the Statutes were for the first time drawn up in English. French or Latin was used at the

Universities, and it was not until 1349 that boys in schools began to learn Latin through the medium of English instead of French.

§ 183. The French element only found its way gradually into literature, and its influx was always much greater in the South than in the North. a difference still reflected in the modern English dialects. The Peterborough Chronicle, which was continued until 1154, contains only fourteen French words. The total number of French loan-words up to the end of the twelfth century amounts only to about a hundred. Between 1250 and 1350 hundreds of words were introduced, and then, after about the year 1400, the numbers began to decrease rapidly. As far as literature is concerned the period of greatest influx was between 1250 and 1400, the highest point being reached during the second half of the fourteenth century. Chaucer employed a far greater number of French words than any other author of his day. As an illustration of the French element in early ME. literature may be quoted the number of French words found in three works belonging to different dialects of the early part of the thirteenth century :—The *Ormulum* (about 1200), consisting of more than 20,000 lines, contains only about 20 ; Laʒamon's *Brut*, Text A (about 1203), consisting of 32,241 short lines, and based upon Wace's *Le Roman de Brut*, contains only 87 ; and the *Ancren Riwle* (about 1210), consisting of about 200 printed pages, contains 500. In conclusion it may be noted that French nouns and adjectives were generally taken over in their accusative forms (O.Fr. generally : nom. sing. -s, acc. sing. no s- ; nom. pl. no s-, acc. pl. -s). In the verbs the strong stem-form of the present sing. sometimes became the type for the whole of the inflexion, but sometimes the weak stem-form of the plural became the type, hence in ME. we often have side by side double forms, as destruien beside destroyen, prēven beside prǭven, see §§ 198, 202.

§ 184. Now that some account has been given of the nature and amount of the French loan-words in ME. we will proceed to look at the subject from a philological point of view. Although it is true that after AN. and C.Fr. words were introduced into English they underwent all further changes in common with the native English words containing the same sounds, yet from a philological point of view it is necessary to know not only how the words were pronounced at the time they were introduced, but also to know what special phonological changes they underwent at the time of their introduction. But this knowledge can only be acquired by treating the subject in much the same manner as the native element is generally treated in passing from OE. to ME. By adopting this method of treatment some light can be thrown upon many phonological points connected with the native element in ME. By way of illustration a few such points may be mentioned here:—

1. However early AN. words containing long ā were introduced, they were not introduced early enough for the long ā to fall together with OE. long ā in ME. except in the northern dialects (§ 51). From this we can infer that OE. long ā began to be rounded to ǭ at a very early period, cp. ME. cāve, damāge, dāme beside bǭt *boat*, stǭn, tǭ *toe*.

2. The ME. ǭ from AN. o in open syllables fell together with the OE. o in open syllables, as cǭte *coat*, rǭse *rose* beside þrǭte (OE. þrote) *throat*, hǭpen (OE. hopian) *to hope*, but not with the ME. ǭ from OE. ā, as in bǭt (OE. bāt) *boat*, stǭn (OE. stān) *stone*. This is clearly proved by the difference in the development of the two kinds of ǭ in the modern dialects, kǫit, þrǫit beside buət, stuən (§ 51 note).

3. And similarly the modern dialects show that the ME. ę̄ from older ei in AN. words (§ 205, 2) fell together with the ME. ę̄ from OE. ǣ (= the i-umlaut of ā) and ēa (§§ 52, 63), but not with the ę̄ from OE. e in open syllables (§ 80).

4. The OE. ü-sound (written y) remained in the west Midland and southern dialects until the end of the fourteenth century and then became unrounded to i (§ 49, 3), but the ü in closed syllables of AN. words was never unrounded to i in the above dialects, but became u during the ME. period (§ 193), which shows that the two kinds of ü had not precisely the same pronunciation otherwise they would regularly have fallen together.   And in like manner the OE. ü-sound (written ȳ) remained in the above dialects until the end of the fourteenth century, and then became unrounded to ī (§ 57, 3), but the ū, of whatever origin, in AN. words was never unrounded to ī; for it iu was substituted in all the dialects of England, see § 202.

§ 185. Before entering upon the history of the AN. simple vowels and diphthongs in ME. it will be useful to state here a few general principles concerning the vowel-system in general.

1. All the nasal vowels became denasalized and then these oral vowels generally had in ME. the same further development as the corresponding original oral vowels.

2. All final accented vowels were long or became long in ME.

3. All short vowels were lengthened in open syllables of dissyllabic forms.

4. Short vowels were lengthened in monosyllables before a single final consonant.

5. Short vowels were lengthened before a mute + liquid.

6. Short vowels were generally lengthened before st (§ 203).

7. Short accented vowels were lengthened before another vowel in dissyllabic words.

8. Vowels were short before consonant combinations other than a mute + liquid.   They also remained short in open syllables of trisyllabic words.

The cause of the lengthening of the stem-vowel in type 4 was due to the inflected forms, just as in ME. native words

like cǭle (OE. col, gen. coles) *coal* (§ 81), &c. The stem-vowel
in words of types 5 and 6 was in reality generally in an
open syllable, because the following consonant combina-
tions mostly belonged to the second syllable. There was
a tendency to shorten the vowel again in types 5 and 6,
especially when the final -e ceased to be pronounced, as
propre, couple, double, trouble; arest, best beside bẹst
beast, forest, tempest, &c.

9. Instead of the AN. the O.Fr. vowel-system is sometimes
taken as the basis for treating the AN. element in ME.
When that is the case it should be remembered that several
of the O.Fr. diphthongs underwent changes in AN.;. the
most important of the independent changes are given in the
following table:—

> O.Fr. ai, ọi, üi, ie, ue
> AN.   ei, ui, ü, ẹ, ǫ

10. As a result of the AN. element in ME. two new
diphthongs were added to those already existing in the
native element, viz. ǫi and ui.

11. In dealing with the vowels we have to distinguish
between : (1) the vowels of accented syllables, (2) the vowels
of pretonic syllables, and (3) the vowels of post-tonic syllables
and unaccented syllables generally.

1. The Vowels of Accented Syllables.

§ 186. The O.Fr. and AN. accented vowels in early
borrowed words, which became post-tonic in ME. through
shifting of the accent, remained for a time unchanged, and
then later became weakened down through loss of the new
secondary accent.

a. *The Short Vowels.*

§ 187. The short vowels generally remained before the
consonant combinations which had short vowels before them
in native words. They also remained in open syllables of

trisyllabic forms. The short nasalized vowels became de-nasalized and then generally had the same further development as the old oral vowels. Examples are :—

§ 188. a :, as **balle, cacchen, calme, charge, charme, large, part, scarce; angle, blank, cancre, frank, janglen,** cp. § 211.

§ 189. AN. ę and ẹ generally appear in ME. as ẹ, as **accepten, castel, clerk, desert, detesten, dette** *dĕbt*, **distresse, lettre, medlen, pressen, taverne, werre** *war*, but **cę̄sen** beside **cessen** *to cease.* The e was often lengthened before r + consonant, as **pę̄rche, sę̄rchen, tę̄rme** beside **perche, serchen, terme,** see § 196. **assenten, at-tempten, defenden, membre, menden, presence, silence.** This e became i before nk at the same time e became i in native words, as **enke, inke** (O.Fr. enque), see § 132.

§ 190. i :, as **consideren, deliveren, dische, epistle, finischen, punischen, resisten, riche ; prince, simple,** cp. § 199.

§ 191. o :, as **apostle, cofre, fors** *force,* **loggen** *to lodge,* **ordre, propre, robben, rollen.** But the o was often lengthened before r + consonant, see § 200.

§ 192. u : O.Fr. ç̧ and u fell together in u in AN., and then the u generally remained in ME., as **discuvren, purpre** *purple,* **purse, puschen (poschen)** *to push,* **turnen, turtle;** with u = O.Fr. ǫ, as **encumbren, numbre, summe, trumpe** *trumpet.*

§ 193. AN. ü (written u) remained in early ME., but during the ME. period it became u, as **juggen** *to judge,* **just, purgen** *to purge,* **sepulcre ; humble.**

b. *The Long Vowels.*

§ 194. All final accented vowels became long. Short vowels were lengthened in monosyllables before a single consonant. Short accented vowels were also lengthened before another vowel in dissyllabic words. All vowels were

lengthened in open syllables of dissyllabic forms, and also
before two consonants belonging to the second syllable.

§ 195. ā :, as blāme, cās *case*, cāve, debāte, escăpen,
dāme, declāren, generāl, grāpe, lāke, pāle, pās ; făble,
mirācle, tāble ; āge (= *ā·dže), and similarly cāge, corāge,
damāge, homāge, imāge ;   grāce   (= *grā·tse), chācen,
plāce, trācen, see § 79 note 1.   But the ă in AN. ·arie =
C.Fr. ·aire from Lat. ·arium remained short in open
syllables, and also generally in ME. verbs ending in ·arien,
as adversarie, Februarie, necessarie ;   carien, marien,
tarien.

§ 196. O.Fr. ẹ̄, as bẹ̄k *beak*, condicionẹ̄l, eternẹ̄l, hostẹ̄l,
nẹ̄t *neat*, prẹ̄chen, repẹ̄len, requẹ̄ren *to require*, wẹ̄re beside
werre *war*, but O.Fr. e before r + consonant, as pẹ̄rcen
(pẹ̄rcen) *to pierce*, pẹ̄rle, rehẹ̄rsen *to rehearse*, sẹ̄rchen,
tẹ̄rme, see §§ 63 note, 205.

§ 197. 1. ẹ̄ = O.Fr. e, as appẹ̄ren *to appear*, beautẹ̄ *beauty*,
clẹ̄r *clear*, daungẹ̄r, frẹ̄re *brother*, pẹ̄r *peer*, pitẹ̄ *pity*,
succẹ̄den.   AN. ·eje, ·eie (= O.Fr. ·ẹ̄e from Lat. ·āta·)
became ·eie (·ey) in ME.   O.Fr. ·ẹ̄e also became ẹ̄ in forms
introduced into ME., although the second e was preserved
in writing, hence in ME. we often have double forms, as
countreie and countrẹ̄ẹ̄, entreie and entrẹ̄ẹ̄, journeie and
journẹ̄ẹ̄, valeie and valẹ̄ẹ̄ *valley*.

2. O.Fr. ie became ẹ̄ in AN. about 1150 and then the
ẹ̄ remained in ME., sometimes written ie, as achẹ̄ven,
fẹ̄ble, grẹ̄ven *to grieve*, manẹ̄re, matẹ̄re, nẹ̄ce *niece*, pẹ̄ce
piece *piece*, preiẹ̄re *prayer*, relẹ̄ven, rivẹ̄re, sẹ̄ge *siege* ;
brẹ̄f, chẹ̄f, grẹ̄f grief *grief*, meschẹ̄f *mischief*, cp. § 50 ;
contẹ̄nen, maintẹ̄nen, sustẹ̄nen.   The verbs of this type
were later remodelled after the analogy of verbs like
ordeinen, see § 210.

§ 198. O.Fr. ue became ō in AN. and then the ō had the
same further development in ME. as OE. ēo (§ 65), that is, it
became unrounded to ẹ̄ in all the dialects except the west

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Midland and the southern dialects, but in these latter dialects it also became unrounded to ẹ̄ about the end of the fourteenth century. It was often written eo and in the west Midland and southern dialects also oe, ue, o, and u, see § 65. Examples are: bẹ̄f *beef,* contrẹ̄ven *to contrive,* dẹ̄l doel duel *sadness,* mẹ̄ven *to move,* pẹ̄ple poeple people *people,* prẹ̄f *proof,* prẹ̄ven, reprẹ̄ven. The verbal forms had in O.Fr. ue in the first pers. singular and ǭ in the first pers. plural, as muef, pl. mǭvons. In ME. the strong form of the singular generally became the type for the whole inflexion, but sometimes the weak form of the plural became the type, hence in ME. we have side by side apprẹ̄ven and apprǭven, mẹ̄ven and mǭven, prẹ̄ven and prǭven, &c. The ẹ̄, ǭ were shortened to e, o before an r in the following syllable, as keveren, koveren *to cover,* &c.

§ 199. ī: as arrīven, brībe, companīe, crȳen, defȳen, denȳen, delīt *delight,* desȳr, despīsen, devīsen, dīnen, entīcen, justīse, malīce, mercȳ, strīven; gentīl, leisīr, prȳs, strīf; bīble, tīgre; fīn *fine,* basīn, gardīn, cp. § 50. The i also became ī before n + dental, as pīnte, but prince, &c.

§ 200. ǭ (= Lat. au, ŏ):, as clǭke, clǭsen, cǭte, dispǭsen, nǭble, nǭte, repǭsen, reprǭchen, restǭren, rǭbe, rǭse, suppǭsen, tresǭr; and also before r + consonant, as fǭrce, fǭrge, pǭrk, pǭrt. Beside fǭl *fool,* pǭre (O.Fr. povre) *poor,* trǭne *throne* we have fǭl, pǭre, trǭne. AN. -orie (= C.Fr. -oire) became -ǭrie in ME., as glǭrie, memǭrie, stǭrie, victǭrie.

§ 201. ū (= AN. u O.Fr. ọ), as allowen, clamour, creatour, culour, devouren, devout, doute *doubt,* flour *flower,* goute, gracious, honour, houre, labour, poudre, sermoun, spouse, tour *tower,* touchen, vouchen; before r + consonant, as course, court, sours *source;* before mb, n, nd, nt, nce, nge (= ndž), as abounden, acount, amount, condicioun, count, encountren, līoun, mount, ounce, pardoun, ploungen, prisoun, pronouncen, renoun, rẹ̄soun

reason, round, soun *sound*, toumbe, but always uncle.
Cp. § 50.   The ū afterwards underwent shortening in
couple, double, ploungen, touchen, troublen.

§ 202. ü = 1. O.Fr. and AN. ü from Lat. ŭ. The pure
ü-sound did not exist in any of the dialects of England at
the time the AN. words containing this sound were intro-
duced.   There was a kind of ü-sound in the west Midland
and some of the southern dialects, but it was different from
the AN. sound, as is evidenced by the subsequent history of
the two sounds both in ME. and the modern dialects (cp.
§ 57).   For AN. ü was substituted what seemed to the
English ear the nearest equivalent, viz. iu, and this is also
the case in modern times when English people without
a knowledge of phonetics attempt to reproduce Modern
French ü.   In the older loan-words it was generally written
u, as duren, usen, vertu, and later also eu, ew, iu, yw
(cp. §§ 112, 116).   Examples are : accūsen, būgle, dūren,
creatūre, cūren, dūk *duke*, figūre, fortūne, mesūre, pūr,
rūde, refūsen, refūten, sūgre *sugar*, sūr, ūsen.

2. = O.Fr. üi (from Lat. ū, ŏ + i) became ü in AN.
for which iu was substituted in ME., written u (ui), eu, ew,
iu, iw, as fruit frut, pu pew puw *pew*, suit, cp. §§ 112, 116.
The verbal forms had in O.Fr. üi in the first pers. sing. and
ǫi in the first pers. plural.   In ME. the strong form of the
singular generally became the type for the whole of the
inflexion, but sometimes the weak form of the plural became
the type, hence in ME. we have side by side forms like
anuien and anoien, destruien and destroien, vuiden and
voiden.

§ 203. Before st we often have double forms just as in
native English words (cp. § 97), and one or other of the forms
became generalized, as chāste, hāste, tāsten, wāsten;
bęste, fęste *feast*, but arest, forest, tempest; Chrīst;
bǫsten, cǫste *coast*, hǫst, pǫst, rǫsten, tǫsten, but cost,
costen; crouste but later cruste ; jŭst.

§ 204. In place of long vowel + a single consonant, we sometimes have a short vowel + double consonant, as chapelle : chapẹle, passen : pās ; cessen : cẹsen *to cease,* dette : dẹte *debt,* lettre : lẹtre, plegge : plẹge *pledge,* werre : wẹre *war* ; quitte : quīte ; loggen : lọgen *to lodge,* proffren : prọfren ; copple (o = u) : couple ; süggre : sügre *sugar,* &c.

c. *The Diphthongs.*

ai, ei

§ 205. O.Fr. ai and ei fell together in ẹi in AN. and then the ei became ai in ME. at the same time as ei became ai in native words (§ 107). And then later the ai became ẹ before consonants, especially before liquids, dentals, and s, so that in ME. we often have ẹ beside ai, and ei. Examples are :—

1. O.Fr. ai, as aiden, air, assaien *to test,* claimen, delai, gai, grain, lai *lay, song,* maire *mayor,* maistre, paien *to pay,* plain, rai, repairen, vain, waiten.

2. O.Fr. ei, as conveien, deceiven, despeir, displeien, heir, obeien, moneie, peine *pain,* preien *to pray,* receiven.

3. O.Fr. ai and ei, as decẹven, dẹs (deis) *table,* disẹse, ẹse (aise) *ease,* encrẹsen, frẹle (fraile) *frail,* grẹse, mẹre (maire), pẹs (pais) *peace,* plẹden, plẹsen, recẹt (receit) *receipt,* recẹven (receiven), sẹsen (saisen) *to seize,* trẹten. See § 63 note.

ọi

§ 206. AN. ọi (= O.Fr. ọi from Lat. au + i) remained in ME., as chọis *choice,* clọistre, jọie, nọise, pọisen *to poise,* rejọisen. The ọi from older ei in C.Fr. loan-words also remained, as cọi, devọir, emplọyen, explọit, &c.

ui

§ 207. O.Fr. ọi, ui (from Lat. ō, u + i) = AN. ui which remained in ME. and also in NE. until the late sixteenth or

early seventeenth century, although it was generally written
oi (oy), as acointen *to acquaint*, boilen, enointen, joint,
point, poisen *to poison*, soilen, &c. Forms like vǫice, mǫist
were from Central French.

au

§ 208. O.Fr. and AN. au from older a + l remained in
early ME., and then later it became ā before labials, as
assaut *assault*, fauchon *falchion*, faute *fault*, heraud, paume,
later pāme *palm of the hand*, sauce, sauf later sāf *safe*,
sauven later sāven, see § 213, 1.

ǫu

§ 209. AN. ǫu (= O.Fr. ieu) remained in early ME. and
then became iu at the same time that ǫu in native words
became iu, written u, eu, ew, iu, iw, see § 112, as adewe
adieu, Jew Jiw, reule rewle riule *rule*; and similarly
O.Fr. ǫu from older ou, as corfew *curfew*, blew bliw *blue*,
nevew *nephew*.

d. *The Formation of New Diphthongs.*

§ 210. Palatal lʲ and nʲ generally became il and in, and
then the i combined with the preceding vowel to form
a diphthong or ī when the preceding vowel was i, as
assailen, aveilen, barain *barren*, bataile, failen, foun-
taine, gainen, maille *mail*, montaine *mountain*, railen,
travail, vitaille *victuals*. atteinen, compleynen, feinen *to
feign*, feint, merveile *marvel*, ordeinen, peinten, reine *reign*
restreinen, veile. And then the ei became ai at the same
time as ei in native words became ai (§ 107). Coloigne
Cologne. ui (written oi) from O.Fr. ui, as boilen, joinen,
oile, soile, spoilen. O.Fr. üi which became ü in AN. and
for which iu was substituted in ME., written u, ui (see § 202,
2), as impugnen, Juil Jul *July*, Juin Jun *June*. benigne
benīne, where -ign = -īn, and similarly resignen, signe,

vīgne ; perīl. When the diphthongs in the above and similar examples lost their secondary accent during the ME. period they were generally weakened down to e, although the old spelling was generally preserved.

Note.—Palatal l, n were often expressed by lj (written lȝ, lȝh, ly), nj (written nȝ) in the Scottish dialects, as balatȝe, ganȝe beside bataile, gaine; and in late ME. they were also sometimes expressed by lj, nj (written li, ni) in the Southern dialects, as talie, spaniel beside taile *tally*, spainel, see Jordan, *ME. Gr.* §§ 253, 256.

§ 211. Between a and a nasal belonging to the same syllable a glide was developed in AN., which in ME. combined with the preceding vowel to form the diphthong au, before final n, before m + labial, and n + dental (= n + d, t or s, n + dž or tš), as aungel, aunte, balaunce, braunche, chaumbre, chaunce, chaunge, daunce daunse, demaun- den, distaunce, exaumple, garlaunde, graunten, haunten, jaumbe, laumpe, paun, plesaunt, servaunt, slaundre, tauny, vaunten. And then later the au became ā before m + labial and n + dž or tš, see § 213, 1.

§ 212. The ā which arose from the above au before n + dž or tš became ai in some parts of the western and northern areas about the end of the fourteenth century, as chaynge *change*, raynge, straynge ; braynche *branch*, staynche *to stanch*.

e. *Monophthongization.*

§ 213. Before certain consonant combinations some of the diphthongs became monophthongs about the end of the thirteenth and early part of the fourteenth centuries :—

1. au became ā before labials, n + dž or tš, dž and tš, as āngel, bāme older baum bawm *balm*, brānche, chāmbre, chāngen, jāmbe, lāmpe ; fāchon *falchion*, gāgen, sāfe, sāvage, sāven *to save*, see §§ 208, 211.

2. ai, ui became a, u before š and s + consonant, as abaschen older abaischen *to abash*, ascheler (O.Fr.

aisselier) *ashlar,* **māster** older **maister, casche** (O.Fr. **caisse**); **buschel** (O.Fr. **buissel**), **cuschin** older **quischin** *cushion,* **cruschen** older **cruischen** *to crush.*

3. **ęu** became **ę̄** before labials, as **flę̄me** older **flę̄ume** *phlegm,* **rę̄me** older **rę̄ume (reaume)** *realm.*

f. *Vowel Contraction.*

§ 214. Vowel contraction took place partly in AN. and partly in ME., especially when the second vowel or diphthong was e, i, u, or ei, oi, as **sę̄l** (O.Fr. **sëel**) *seal,* **vę̄l** (O.Fr. **vëel**) *veal,* **chaine** (O.Fr. **chaëine**), **cǫin** (O.Fr. **cooin**) *quince,* **brawn** (O.Fr. **braoun**), **mirour** (O.Fr. **mireür**), **sūr** (O.Fr. **seür**) *sure;* O.Fr. third pers. sing. **obeït** *he obeys,* pl. **obeïssent,** whence ME. **obeien** beside **obeischen,** and similarly **abaischen** *to abash,* **traien** beside **traischen** *to betray,* **rejǫischen** *to rejoice.*

Contraction also took place when intervocalic i-consonant disappeared, as **dę̄n** (O.Fr. **deien**) *dean,* **lę̄l** (O.Fr. **leiel**) *loyal,* **mę̄n** (O.Fr. **meien**) *mean, middle.*

2. The Vowels of Pretonic Syllables.

§ 215. The O.Fr. and AN. pretonic vowels and diphthongs which became tonic (accented) through the shifting of the accent generally remained in ME. The short vowels were, however, generally lengthened before a following vowel and in open syllables of early borrowed words, but remained short in later borrowed words.

a. *The Simple Vowels.*

§ 216. a, ā, au:, as **amorous, barоun, bataile, carpenter, chapę̄le, chariot, gardīn, manę̄re, palais, ravenous, taverne, travaien. ā-miable, ā-precock** *apricot,* **bācoun, bāsīn** *basin,* **flāvour, grācious, māsoun** *mason,* **nācioun** *nation,* **nātūre** *nature,* **pācient,** see § 79 note 1. AN. ā was

denasalized to a before nd, nt, and ng, as **anguische, language, mantel, standard.** In other positions it had the same development as in accented syllables (§ 211), as **auncient, brandischen** beside **braundischen, chaumpion, chauncel, daungẹr, raunsoun** *ransom*.

§ 217. e, ẹ :, as **lessoun, mercī, metal, nevew, perīl** beside **peril, plesaunt, present, secounde; aventūre, engīn, gentīl, plentẹ, tempeste. lẹsīr, plẹsir, rẹsīn** *grape*, **rẹsoun** *reason*, see § 63 note. Before r + consonant we have e later a (§ 129), as **gerlaund, merchaunt, merveile, persoune, sermoun,** later **garlaund,** &c.

§ 218. i, ī :, as **citẹ, diner, finischen, pitẹ, scriptūre, vinẹgre. gīaunt** *giant*, **līoun, squīer. pīlot, īvorie.**

§ 219. o :, as **comoun, folie** *folly*, **foreste, fortūne, gobelet, honouren, office, solas** *solace*, **torment.**

§ 220. u, ū (written ou, ow), as **buteler, butoun** *button*, **culour, glutoun, mutoun, sudain, supere. coward, dowere doure** *dowry*, **powere, towaile** *towel* ; **bountẹ, counseil, countrẹ, fountaine, mountaine.**

§ 221. ü, ǖ. ü remained in early ME., but became **u** during the ME. period (cp. § 125), and iu was substituted for ǖ (cp. § 202), as **duchesse, juggement, punischen, studien** *to study*. **cruel crewel, humilitẹ, humour, suretẹ, usage.**

b. *The Diphthongs.*

§ 222. The pretonic diphthongs generally had the same development in ME. as the tonic (accented) diphthongs except that ei underwent weakening in medial syllables.

§ 223. ai was generally monophthongized to ẹ, but forms with ai also occur in ME., as **fẹtūre** and **faitūre** *feature*, **rẹsoun** and **raisoun, sẹsoun** and **saisoun,** see §§ 63 note, 205 ; the ai remained before old palatal l, as **tailour** *tailor*, see § 210.

§ 224. ei :, as **leisīr** *leisure*, **preiẹre** *prayer*, **veiǎge** (O.Fr. **voiǎge**) *voyage*.. **curtesie** beside older **curteisie, orisoun**

beside older **oreisoun**, **venisoun** beside older **veneisoun** (O.Fr. venoison).

§ 225. **ǫi :**, as j**ǫ**ious.

§ 226. **ui** (written oi):, as **oinoun** *onion*, **poisoun** *poison.*

§ 227. O.Fr. **üi** = AN. **ü**, for which the iu-sound was substituted in ME. (§ 202, 2), as **nuisaunce.**

§ 228. **au :**, as **auter** *altar*, **faucon** *falcon*, **saumoun** *salmon*, **sauvǎge** (see § 213, 1).

§ 229. **eau**, **ęu** became iu (see § 112), as **beautę̄ beutę̄ bewtę̄** *beauty* ; **fewaile** *fuel*, **jewel** *jewel.*

3. The Vowels of Post-tonic and Unaccented Syllables generally.

§ 230. The vowel in post-tonic syllables was always ·e, as in **chapę̄le**, **faute**, **justise**, **madǎme**, **natūre**, **reine** *reign.* The final ·e in these and similar words disappeared in pronunciation earlier in ME. than the ·e in words of English origin (cp. §§ 141-2). This was especially the case after **st**, **ce** (= s) and after vowels, as **bę̄st(e)**, **tempest(e)**, **plǎc(e)**, **foli(e)** *folly*, **maladi(e)**, **prei(e)** *prey.* In this respect Chaucer was behind the spoken language of his time. In his poetry the final ·e was preserved in pronunciation, and he never allowed words ending in ·**ce** (= s) to rhyme with those ending in ·**s** nor those ending in ·**ye** (·ie) with those ending in ·**y.**

For the weakening down of long vowels and diphthongs which were accented in O.Fr. and AN., but became unaccented in ME. through the shifting of the principal accent, see §§ 186, 210.

§ 231. Initial e- disappeared before s + tenuis, as **Spaine**, **spȳen**, **staat** beside **estaat**, **stüdien**, **scǎpen** beside **escǎpen**, **squirel** (O Fr. escurel). Initial vowels also often disappeared before other consonants, as **menden** beside **amenden**, **prentȳs** beside **aprentȳs, pistil** beside **epistil.**

Initial prefixes often disappeared, as **fenden** beside **defenden,** **steinen** beside **desteinen** *to stain,* **sport** beside **disport,** **saumple** beside **ensaumple,** &c.

§ 232. Medial vowels often disappeared between consonants, as **chimneie** beside **chimeneie** *chimney,* **kerchẹf** beside **keverchẹf, nortūre** beside **noritūre, pantrie** beside **panetrie** *pantry,* **palfrei** beside **palefrei,** &c., cp. § 154.

CHAPTER VI

THE ME. DEVELOPMENT OF THE OE. CONSONANT-SYSTEM

§ 233. OE. had the following consonant-system :—

	Labial.	*Inter-dental.*	*Dental.*	*Guttu-ral.*	*Pala-tal.*
Explosives	voiceless **p, pp**		**t, tt**	**c, cc**	**c, cc**
	voiced **b, bb**		**d, dd**	**g, gg**	**g, cg**
Spirants	voiceless **f, ff**	**þ, þþ**	**s, ss**	**h, hh**	**h, hh**
	voiced **f**	**þ**	**s**	**g**	**g**
Nasals	**m, mm**		**n, nn**	**ŋ**	**ŋ**
Liquids			**l, ll; r, rr**		
Semi-vowel	**w**				

To these must be added the aspirate **h,** and **x.** The double consonants were pronounced long as in Modern Italian and Swedish, thus **habban** = **hab-ban** *to have,* **swimman** = **swim-man** *to swim.* On the doubling of consonants in late ME., see § 12, and *ENE. Gr.* §§ 53–4.

§ 234. Many of the changes which the OE. consonant-system underwent in ME. were not sound-changes, but merely orthographical changes due to the influence of the Anglo-Norman system of orthography. Most of these changes have been stated in §§ 13–20, and others will be dealt with in the treatment of the separate consonants.

The sound-changes which the OE. consonants underwent in
ME. were insignificant compared with the vowel-changes.
In fact the consonants have changed comparatively little in
the whole history of the language, whereas the vowels have
been continuously on the change and still are so. It may
therefore be said that the consonants in a language like
English merely form, as it were, the framework of the
language, and that the vowels are the clockwork or
living organism. This is quite different from a language
like French where the consonants equally with the vowels
have undergone great and radical changes in passing from
popular Latin to the French of the present day.

§ 235. Before entering upon the history of the individual
consonants in ME., it will be well to treat here several con-
sonant-changes which are best dealt with collectively, viz.
the voicing and unvoicing of consonants, the vocalization of
consonants, assimilation, metathesis, the loss of consonants,
and the development of glide consonants.

1. The Voicing of Consonants.

§ 236. The initial voiceless spirants f, s, þ became the
voiced spirants v, z, ð in late OE. or early ME. in Kentish
and the southern, especially the south-western dialects, as
vader, vat, vlesch, vrend; zaule zoule, zinne zenne
zünne *sin*, ðat ðet, ðing. The modern dialects show that
this voicing of the initial voiceless spirants must have taken
place at an early period, because it is almost exclusively
confined to native words, hence the change must have taken
place before the great influx of Anglo-Norman words into
these dialects. The use of the in·tial voiced for the voiceless
spirants is now obsolete in Ken., Sur., Sus., and obsolescent
in s. Pem., Hamp., and the I. W., but it is still in general
use in east Hrf., parts of Glo., west Brks., Wil., Som., and
Dev. These modern dialects help to throw some light upon

the standard NE. voiced ð (written th) in pronouns and the adverbs related to them. There is no indication either in ME. or NE. to show when the þ- became voiced in such words, but the dialects of Sus., Ken., and s. Pem. show that it must have taken place pretty early, because in these dialects the þ- has become d-, although the forms with d- are now obsolescent in the two latter counties. Examples are: deə *their, there,* dem, den, di *the,* dis. These forms with d- show that the voicing of the þ- in pronominal and adverbial forms was older than the voicing of it in the other OE. words beginning with þ. See *ED. Gr.* §§ 278, 310, 320.

§ 237. In simple words the voiceless spirants f, s, þ became voiced between voiced sounds in early OE., although they were always retained in writing, and this rule was also preserved in ME., see *EOE. Gr.* § 139. Final ·s and ·þ became voiced after vowels during the ME. period in un-accented syllables, although the ·s, ·þ (·th) were retained in writing. And similarly in unaccented words like his, is, was.

2. The Unvoicing of Consonants.

§ 238. In early OE. the voiced spirants v (written f), ʒ became voiceless f, χ before voiceless sounds and finally, and this rule was also preserved in early ME., see §§ 266, 308, and *EOE. Gr.* § 140. When final ·e disappeared at an early period (§ 139) z, v and ð became unvoiced to s, f and þ, as bǭþę, erþę, frǫþę, northern dialects rīs *to rise,* gif *to give,* luf *to love,* beside older rīse(n), give(n), luve(n).

The g in the combination ŋg became k (written c) before voiceless consonants in OE., but the g was generally restored through association with forms where the g was regular, as strencþ beside strengþ with g restored from strang strong (cp. *EOE. Gr.* § 140), whence such ME. double forms as lenkþ, strenkþ beside lengþ, strengþ, and forms with ŋk are still common in many of the modern dialects, see Index

to *ED. Gr.* There was also a tendency for final ŋg to become ŋk in some of the ME. dialects, especially in the north-west Midland, as in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*: ʒonk(e) *young*, rynk *ring*, þink *thing*, &c., and such forms are still common in some of the dialects of this area, see *ED. Gr.* § 274.

§ 239. In early OE. d became t before and after voiceless consonants. When two dentals thus came together, they became tt which were simplified to t finally and after consonants (*EOE. Gr.* § 140). This rule also remained as a characteristic feature of the southern dialects in the ME. period, as bintst beside older bīndest *thou bindest*, bitst beside older bidest *thou prayest*, bint from *bindþ, older bīndeþ *he binds*, bit from *bidþ, older bideþ *he prays*, &c. And in like manner the d also became t in the pp. of trisyllabic weak verbs after the loss of the ·e· in the final syllable, as punischt, witnest beside older punisched, witnessed, see § 155. In ME. as in the modern dialects (cp. *ED. Gr.* §§ 303-4) there was a tendency to unvoice d to t in final unaccented syllables. This was especially the case in the preterite and past participle in the Scottish and west Midland dialects. For the unvoicing of d to t in the preterite and past participle of verbal stems ending in ·ld, ·nd, and ·rd, see § 270. And in the west Midland dialects d also became t finally after l, n, r in monosyllables, as bęrt *beard*, felt *field*, pret. helt *held*, lont *land*, wint *wind*, &c.; the t in these and similar words has been preserved in many of the dialects of this area down to the present day, see *ED. Gr.* § 302.

3. The Vocalization of Consonants.

§ 240. The prefix ʒe· became i· through the intermediate stages ī·, ʒi·, which remained initially (also written y·), as iwis ywis (OE. gewiss) *certain*, iclad yclad *clothed*, but disappeared medially through the intermediate stage ·e·, as neighbour, older nehhebour (OE. nēahgebūr), see § 153.

Medial palatal ȝ became i between r and a following vowel, as burie(n) birie(n) (OE. byr(i)gan) *to bury*, murie mirie (OE. myr(i)ge) *pleasant*, terie(n) (OE. tergan) *to annoy*, and similarly in French words, carie(n), contrarie, marie(n), studie(n). Palatal ȝ became vocalized to i after vowels and then combined with a preceding vowel to form a diphthong of the i-type, see §§ 105, 299.

§ 241. When w came to stand finally after consonants it became vocalized to u, as pl. ȝarwe (OE. gearwe) from which was formed a new sing. ȝaru *ready*, and similarly holu *hollow*, naru *narrow*, &c., see § 134 (a). Postvocalic old w became vocalized to u, and then combined with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong of the u-type, as chęwen (OE. cēowan) *to chew*, knǫwen (OE. cnāwan) *to know*, schęwen (OE. scēawian, later sceáwian) *to show*, beside northern chęu (chęu), knau, schęu, see §§ 110, 2, 111. And in like manner w from OE. and early ME. guttural ȝ became vocalized to u after a guttural vowel and then combined with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong of the u-type, see §§ 105, 298.

§ 242. v was vocalized to u (generally written w) when it stood or came to stand before a consonant through the loss of a medial unaccented vowel (§ 153), as awkward from older *avkward, *avuk-, pl. chaules (OE. cēaflas) from which was formed a new singular chaul *cheek*, crawlen (ON. krafla) *to crawl*, ęwte older evete (OE. efete) *newt*, pl. hawkes (OE. hafocas) from which a new singular hawk was formed, nauger older naveger (OE. nafogār) *auger*.

4. ASSIMILATION

§ 243. Partial or total assimilation of dentals took place in unaccented particles, as and tat = and þat, atte = at þe, þatte = þat þe, and similarly with þū *thou* after verbal forms with simplification of the tt, as artū *art thou?*, wiltū *wilt*

thou ?; these and similar forms are still a characteristic feature of the Modern northern and north Midland dialects, see *ED. Gr.* § 404. ln and nl became ll, as elle older elne (OE. eln) *ell*, mille older milne (OE. myln), elleven(e) beside older enleven (OE. en(d)leofan) *eleven*. fm became mm, as lemman (OE. lēofman) *sweetheart*, wimman (OE. wimman beside wīfman) *woman*. n became m before f and p, as com-fort (O.Fr. confort), hemp (OE. henep), noumpere (O.Fr. nonper) *umpire*. pf became ff, as chaffare (OE. *cēapfaru) *trade*.

5. METATHESIS.

§ 244. The metathesis of r was common in QE., especially in the Northumbrian dialect. Already at that period ante-vocalic r often became postvocalic when a short vowel was followed by n, nn, s or s+consonant (*EOE. Gr.* § 143). ME. examples are: bird (OE. brid), briʒt (OE. beorht) *bright*, forst beside frost (OE. forst beside frost), hors (OE. hros), þirde (OE. þridda); asken beside axen = OE. āscian beside āxian *to ask*.

6. THE LOSS OF CONSONANTS.

§ 245. Postconsonantal w disappeared before back-rounded vowels, as alsǫ, ase (OE. ealswā), sǫ (OE. swā), soche suche beside swich (OE. swylc), sord beside sword, sǫte beside swǫte *sweet* adv., suster (OE. sweostor, § 38) *sister*, tǫ beside twǫ (OE. twā), þong beside þwong, hǫ beside whǫ (OE. hwā). It also disappeared in certain verbal forms with the negative prefix, as nas (OE. næs = ne wæs) *was not*, nille (OE. nille = ne wille) *will not*, and similarly niste *I knew not*, nǫt *I know not*, nolde *I would not*, &c.

§ 246. l disappeared in the Midland and southern dialects before and after ch = OE. palatal c, as ęch (OE. ǣlc) *each*, muche moche, miche (OE. mycel) *great*, suche soche, siche, swich (OE. swylc), which whuch (OE. hwylc),

beside northern **ilk, mikel, swilk, quilk.** It also dis-
appeared in the unaccented particle **ase** beside the accented
form **alsǭ** (OE. **ealswā**).

§ **247.** Final **-n** disappeared early in dissyllabic and tri-
syllabic nouns and adjectives in the Midland and southern
dialects, but was often or generally restored again from the
inflected forms, as **kinrēde, kindred** (OE. **cyn-ræden**), **ēve**
beside **ēven** *evening*, **maide(n).** It had disappeared in Nor-
thumbrian during the OE. period in words of more than one
syllable. This law was fairly well preserved in the infinitive,
the present and preterite plural subjunctive, the weak
declension of nouns and adjectives, numerals and adverbs,
but in strong nouns and adjectives including the past parti-
ciples of strong verbs, the final **-n** was generally reintroduced
into the nom. singular from the inflected forms. It was
also mostly reintroduced into the pret. indicative plural
through the influence of the past participle, which itself was
a new formation.

In early ME. the final **-n** disappeared in unaccented
syllables except in the pp. of strong verbs in the northern
and north Midland dialects. In the other Midland dialects
it was mostly retained, especially in the present plural of
the indicative, the infinitive, and the past participle of strong
verbs. It was retained in the southern dialects in the weak
declension of nouns and adjectives, whereas in the Kentish
dialect it disappeared at an early period in the past parti-
ciple of strong verbs, see § 147. Final **-n** disappeared in the
indefinite article and the possessive pronouns when the next
word began with a consonant, as **ā, ǭ þing** (OE. **ān**), **nǭ
þing** (OE. **nān**) **mī fader** (OE. **mīn**). When the next word
began with a vowel the **-n** was run on to it, as **mī nēm** (OE.
mīn ēam) *my uncle.*

§ **248.** Final **b** disappeared after **m** in the northern dialects
about the beginning of the fourteenth century, as **dum**
dumb, **lam** *lamb.* **f** disappeared in O.Fr. before final **-s**, as

nom. sing. **baillis** beside acc. **baillif**, whence ME. **bailli** beside **baillif**, **joli** beside **jolif**, **pensi** beside **pensif** *thoughtful*. The forms **baily** and **pensy** are still very common in the modern dialects. v from older f also disappeared before consonants, as **hęd** beside older **hęved** (OE. **hēafod**) *head*, **lādi** from older **lavdie, lavedie** (OE. **hlæfdige**) *lady*, **larke** from older **laverke** (§ 88), **lǫrd** from older **lǫverd** (OE. **hlāford, -ard**) *lord*. The common forms þar *I need*, þarst, þar, beside þarf, þarft, þarf were due to association with dar *I dare*, darst, dar.

§ 249. t disappeared before st, between s and s or m, as **best** (OE bet(e)st), **laste** (OE. latost) *last*, **Wessex** (OE. **West-Seaxan**), **blosme** (OE **blōstma** beside **blōsma**) *blossom*. d̄ disappeared before s, as **answere** (OE. **and-swaru**), **gospel** beside older **godspel**, **gossib** beside older **godsib**. þ disappeared at the end of the first element of compounds, as **Norfolk** (OE. **Norþ-folc**), **Sussex** (OE. **Sūþ-seaxan**), **wurschipe** beside older **wurþschipe** *worship*. It also disappeared in the medial combinations -þn-, -þr- with lengthening of the preceding vowel, as **hěn** (ON. **heþan**) *hence*, **sǐn, sěn** (OE. **siþþan, sioþþan**) *since*, **þěn** (ON. **þeþan**) *thence*, **whěr** *whether*, see § 76.

§ 250. Intervocalic k disappeared in the preterite and past participle **māde, mād** (maad) for older **mākede, māked**. From the pret. and pp. was then formed a new present **mā(n)** in the northern and north Midland dialects, after the analogy of which was also formed a new present **tā(n)** for **tāken**, see § 79 note 1. Final -ch disappeared in unaccented words and syllables in late ME., as **I** beside **ich**, -ly beside older -liche, as in **hevenly** beside **hevenliche**. Initial h- disappeared before l, n, r, but these combinations were often written lh, nh, rh in early ME., especially in Kentish, as **lępen** (OE. **hlēapan**) *to leap*, **lauȝen** (Anglian **hlæhha(n)**) *to laugh*, **neien** (OE. **hnǣgan**) *to neigh*, **nute** (OE. **hnutu**) *nut*, **rāven** (OE. **hræfn**), **ring** (OE. **hring**).

7. THE DEVELOPMENT OF GLIDE CONSONANTS IN ME.

§ 251. Glide consonants were developed, especially in the neighbourhood of nasals and s.

A b was developed between m-l, m-r, as bremble (OE. brēmel, gen. brēmles) *bramble*, schamble (OE. sceamol, gen. sceam(o)les), þimble (OE. þȳmel, gen. þȳmles), slumbren (OE. slŭmerian), and also after m in croumbe (OE. crūma) *crumb*, þoumbe (OE. þūma) *thumb*. A p was developed between m-n, m-t, as nempnen (OE. nemnan) *to name*, empti (OE. ǣmtig), and in French words like autumpne *autumn*, dampnen *to damn*, solempne *solemn*, tempten *to attempt*.

A d was developed between l-r, n-r, as alder (OE. alr, alor) *alder*, þe alderbeste (OE. ealra betsta) *the best of all*, and similarly alderfirst, alderlast; kindred (OE. cyn-rǣden), þunder (OE. þunor, gen. þun(o)res). jaundice beside jaunice (AN. jaunisse). A final -t was developed after n in AN. words, as auncient (O.Fr. ancien), and similarly fesaunt, tiraunt, ribant (riband) beside riban *ribbon*. A t was developed between s and n in glistnen (OE. glisnian), listnen (OE. hlysnan) *to listen*, and after final -s, as aȝainest beside older aȝaines, bihȩste (OE. behǣs) *vow, promise*, hȩst (OE. hǣs) *command*.

THE SEMIVOWELS.

w

§ 252. OE. Ƿ was still used occasionally until the thirteenth century, but in early ME. w was generally written uu, more rarely vv, and in northern manuscripts u after dentals and s. In late northern manuscripts it was often written v. w was introduced from the AN. alphabet in the thirteenth century, and OE. cw came to be written qu.

§ 253. OE. **w** remained initially before vowels, and generally also initially before and after consonants, as **warm** (OE. **wearm**), **weder** (OE. **weder**) *weather*, **wlank** (OE. **wlanc**) *proud*, **wríten** (OE. **wrítan**), **twelf** (OE. **twelf**), and similarly **was, water, wēpen** *to weep*, **wíde, winter, wischen, wolf, wounde, wunder**, and similarly in AN. words, as **waiten, wāsten, werre** *war*, &c.; **wlite** *face, form*, **wrecche** *wretched*; **dwellen, swimmen, twig**; **quēne** (OE. **cwēn**) *queen, woman*, **quik** (OE. **cwic**).

It also remained medially after consonants, as **wid(e)we** (OE. **wid(e)we**) *widow*, **medwe** beside **mēde** (OE. gen. **mǣdwe** beside nom. **mǣd**) *meadow*, and similarly **holwe** *hollow*, **schadwe, swalwe**. For the vocalization and loss of **w** see §§ 241, 245.

§ 254. AN. **w** (= O.Fr. **gu**, later **g**, in words of Germanic origin) remained in ME., as **rewarden, wāge, waiten, wāsten, werre** *war*.

The O.Fr. combination **qu** = **kw** remained in ME. before **a, e, i**, but became **k** (**c**) before **o, u**, as **equal, qualitēe, quarter, questioun**; but **cǫi, likour**.

Germanic j

§ 255. Germanic initial **j** had become a palatal spirant like the **y** in NE. **yet, you** in the oldest period of the language. This explains why it was written **g** in OE., and **ȝ**, later **y**, in ME., see *EOE. Gr.* §§ 150-1. The OE. sound remained initially in ME., as **ȝě** (OE. **gě**) *ye*, **ȝēr ȝēr** (OE. **gēar, gēr**) *year*, and similarly **ȝet ȝit** *yet*, **ȝif** *if*, **ȝok ȝǫke** *yoke*, **ȝong** *young*, **ȝouþe** *youth*. See § 240.

The Liquids.

l

§ 256. OE. and AN. **l** generally remained in all positions of the word, as **loud** (OE. **hlūd**), **fallen** (OE. **feallan**), **āle** (OE. **ealu**), **clēne** (OE. **clǣne**), **all** (OE. **eall**), **dēl** (OE. **dǣl**),

and similarly lamb, lẹpen, litel, loven; fillen, sellen, tellen, wolle; blọd, flesch, folk, glad, helpen, milk, nẹdle, silver, sọule, stẹlen; foul, full, sadel; labour, langāge; blāmen, calme, delai, failen, tāble; crüel. For the loss of l see § 246.

r

§ 257. OE. and AN. r generally remained in all positions of the word, as roum (OE. rūm), bringen (OE. bringan), bẹren (OE. beran), hard (OE. heard), sterre (OE. steorra) *star*, fader (OE. fæder), and similarly rẹd *red*, rein *rain*, rīden; arm, bāre, erþe *earth*, ferre *far*, grẹne, sprẹden, strẹm *stream*, trẹ, word, wrīten; better, fȳr *fire*, mọder; rāge, round; chaumbre, fọrce, grāce, natūre, trouble; pūr. For the metathesis of r see § 244.

THE NASALS.

m

§ 258. OE. and AN. m generally remained in ME., as mọder (OE. mōdor) *mother*, clīmben (OE. climban), nāme (OE. nama), roum (OE. rūm), and similarly māken, man, mīn, mouþ; cọmb, cumen, swimmen, tīme; bọsem, botem, brọm, faþem, helm, worm; maladie, moneie; chaumbre, damāge, lampe.

§ 259. Final ·m, when an element of inflexion, became ·n in late OE., as dat. pl. dagon, giefon, sunon beside older dagum, giefum, sunum; dat. sing. and pl. gōdon beside older gōdum. This change of final ·m to ·n was due to the levelling out of the ·n in the n·stems into the dative plural, and from which it was then extended analogically to the other stems. The ·n disappeared at an early period in ME. (cp. § 147). The old inflexional ending with ·m was preserved in the ME. isolated form whīlom, the dat. pl. of OE. hwīl *time*, used adverbially.

n

§ 260. OE. and AN. dental n generally remained, as nāme (OE. nama), biginnen (OE. beginnan), sune (OE. sunu) *son*, stǫn *stone*, and similarly nēdle, niȝt; gnawen *to gnaw*, grēne, henne, hound, knē, land, quẹne, senden, sunre *sun*; chin, toun; natüre, nǫble, nǫise ; aunte, chaunce, point ; baroun, vain. For the loss of final ·n see §§ 147, 247.

ŋ

§ 261. OE. and AN. guttural ŋ (written n) remained, as bringen (OE. bringan), singen, pret. pl. sungen (OE. singan, sungon), tunge (OE. tunge), and similarly drinken, finger, kiŋg, laŋg long, þanken; anguische, frank, langāge, &c.

§ 262. OE. palatal ŋc (§ 286) and ŋg (§ 294) became ntš (written nch) and ndž (written ng), as benche (OE. benc), finch (OE. finc), þenchen (OE. þencan) *to think* ; sengen singen (OE. sengean) *to singe*.

§ 263. In many dialects the OE. palatal combinations eŋc, eŋg became ein before d, t, þ with i to indicate the palatal nature of the n, the ei then later became e, as pret. meinde (OE. mengde) *he mixed*, dreinte (OE. drencte) *he drowned*, and similarly bleinte *he deceived*, seinde *he singed*, sleinde *he slung*. &c., leinten, later lenten (OE. lengten, lencten) *spring, Lent*, leinþe, lenþe (OE. lengþu), streinþe, strenþe (OE. strengþu). The forms lenþ strenþ are still the usual forms in all the dialects of Scotland and the northern counties. Cp. §§ 238, 295.

The Labials.

p

§ 264. OE. and AN. p generally remained in all positions of the word, as paþ (OE. pæþ), slẹpen slēpen (OE. slǣpan, slēpan), dẹp (OE. dēop), and similarly peni, pleien *to play*,

pound, prēst, proud; cuppe, harpe, helpen, lippe, spēken, steppen, wēpen *to weep*; pret. halp, schip; part, plēsen *to please*, present; lampe, purple, spāce.

b

§ 265. OE. and AN. b generally remained in all positions of the word, as bēren (OE. beran), brēken (OE. brecan), ribbe (OE. ribb), web (OE. webb), and similarly baþ, bīnden, blak, bǫn, bringen; clīmben, clubbe, ebbe, webbe *female weaver*; cǫmb, doumb *dumb*, gossib; bēst, blāmen, boilen; chaumbre, labour, membre, tāble.

ME. hǎven *to have*, hēven *to raise, heave*, liven beside OE. habban, hebban, libban were new formations made from the present second and third pers. singular hafast, hafaþ, &c.

f

§ 263. OE. medial and final f had a twofold origin and a twofold pronunciation, see *EOE. Gr.* §§ 157–8.

1. Medially in combination with voiceless sounds, and finally, it was pronounced like NE. f, and corresponded to Germanic ƀ and f, as wīf (= OHG. wīb, NHG. weib), wulf (= OHG. wolf).

2. Medially between voiced sounds it was pronounced like the v in NE. vine, five, and corresponded to Germanic ƀ and f, as giefan (OHG. geban), pl. wulfas (OHG. wolfa). In early ME. the OE. voiced f was generally written u (rarely v). In the Scottish and northern dialects w was sometimes written for v in AN. words, as wertu, trawail

1. OE. Voiceless f.

§ 267. OE. initial and final f, and f in combination with voiceless sounds, remained, as fader (OE. fæder), dēf (OE. dēaf) *deaf*, fif (OE. fīf) *five*, after (OE. æfter), and similarly

ferre *far*, fīnden, flȳen *to fly*, folk, frēsen *to freeze*, full ;
calf, lēf *leaf*, turf, twelf ; gift, offren ; also in AN. words,
as fāce, frut (fruit) ; brēf *brief*, strīf. Forms like fīve be-
side fīf, grāve beside OE. græf, twelve beside older twelf
were new formations from the inflected forms. For the
voicing of initial f in Kentish and the southern dialects see
§ 236.

<div style="text-align:center">2. OE. Medial f = v.</div>

§ 268. OE. medial f = v generally remained, as drīven
(OE. drīfan), havest, haveþ (OE. hafast, hafaþ), and
similarly bēver, given (ȝiven), heven, knāve, loven,
rāven, seven, sterven *to die*, wēven ; also in AN. words,
as valour, verai ; availen, avengen, serven. f from older
v disappeared in the unaccented forms hast, haþ beside the
accented forms havest, haveþ. For other examples of the
loss of v see § 248. For the unvoicing of v see § 238, and
for the vocalization of v to u (generally written w) see
§ 242.

<div style="text-align:center">THE DENTALS.</div>

<div style="text-align:center">t</div>

§ 269. OE. and AN. t generally remained in all positions
of the word, as tāle (OE. talu), tunge (OE. tunge), bīten
(OE. bītan), setten (OE. settan), what (OE. hwæt), and
similarly tāken, tellen, tīme, toun, trē, twig ; better,
ēten, fiȝten *to fight*, herte, resten, sitten, swēte, preterites
like grette *he greeted*, kepte, slepte ; fōt, mōst, niȝt *night* ;
tāble, tempest ; douten *to doubt*, straunge ; delīt *delight*.

NOTE.—1. c, z (also occasionally ȝ) were sometimes written for
ts, as blecen (Orm blettsenn, OE. bletsian) *to bless*, milze,
Orm millce (OE. milts) *mercy*.

2. In late ME. th was sometimes written for t in French words,
as autour (O.Fr. auteur) later authour, tēme (O.Fr. tesme) later
thēme, trōne (O.Fr. trone) later thrōne.

d

270. OE. and AN. d generally remained in all positions of the word, as **dai** (OE. dæg), **drinken** (OE. drincan), **bidden** (OE. biddan), **bīnden** (OE. bindan), **fader** (OE. fæder), **dẹ̄d** (OE. dēad), and similarly **dẹ̄p, dǫu3ter** *daughter*, **dwellen** ; **bodi, bladder, fīnden, fǫlden, sadel, þunder, weder** *weather*, **wīlde**; **bed, fẹ̄ld, god, hard, land, ǭld, word**; **dāme, daungẹ̄r; maladie, pardoun; round.** But single d between a vowel and a following vocalic r (written er) began to become ð in native words from the beginning of the fifteenth century, as **father, gather(en), wether** *weather*, from older **fader, gaderen, weder**, see *ENE. Gr.* § 230. The t in the preterite and pp. of verbal stems ending in -l, -ll, -ld, -rd, -m, -n, -nd was due to the analogy of preterites and past participles like **kepte, kept; mette, met; kiste, kist**, where the t was regular, as **bilte** (OE. bylde), **bilt; dwẹlte, dwelt; felte, felt; girte, girt; dremte, dremt; blente, blent** *blended*, **sente, sent.** For the unvoicing of d see § 239.

þ

§ **271.** OE. þ (ð) had a twofold pronunciation, see *EOE. Gr.* § 139.

1. Initially, medially when doubled, and finally it was pronounced like the th in NE. thin.

2. Medially between voiced sounds it was pronounced like the th in NE. then.

In the fourteenth century th gradually came to be used beside þ, but the þ continued to be written beside th, especially initially, throughout the ME. period. In the best manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales* th is generally used (cp. § 20).

1. Voiceless þ.

§ **272.** OE. voiceless þ generally remained, as **þing** (OE. þing), **þrẹ̄d þrẹ̄d** (OE. þrǣd) *thread*, **kiþþe** (OE. cȳþþu)

kindred, dēþ (OE. dēaþ) *death*, and similarly þanken, þenken þinken, þorn; wraþþe; baþ, mouþ, tōþ. The pret. quod beside quoþ had d from the old plural. For the voicing of initial þ in the Kentish and southern dialects see § 236, and of final ·þ in unaccented syllables, see § 237.

§ 273. þ became t after voiceless spirants, as drouȝte (OE. drūgoþ) *drought*, heiȝte (OE. hīehþu) *height*, leste (OE. þȳ læs þe) *lest*, nosterl beside older nosþyrl *nostril*, siȝte (OE. gesihþ) *sight*, þefte (OE. þēofþ, þīefþ) *theft*.

2. Voiced þ.

§ 274. OE. voiced þ generally remained, as brōþer (OE. brōþor), leþer (OE. leþer) *leather*, and similarly bāþen, biquēþen, blīþe, faþem, hēþen *heathen*, ōþer, sēþen *to seethe*, &c. The pret. coude beside couþe *could* was a new formation after the analogy of the other preterites in ·de. For the unvoicing of þ see § 238.

§ 275. þ became d before and after liquids, as aforden beside older aforþen (OE. geforþian), burdene beside older burþene (OE. byrþenn), and similarly fiddle, murdren *to murder*.

THE SIBILANT s.

§ 276. OE. s had a twofold pronunciation, see *EOE. Gr.* § 139.

1. It was voiceless initially, medially when doubled, and in combination with voiceless consonants, and finally. In ME. the letter c was sometimes used for s initially and in AN. words both initially and medially (cp. § 24). sc was also sometimes written for ss, as blescen bliscen = blessen *to bless*. The OE. final ·s which in ME. became voiced after voiced sounds in unaccented syllables (§ 237) was sometimes written ȝ, as heggeȝ *hedges*.

2. It was voiced (= z) medially between voiced sounds. In early ME. voiced s was only occasionally written z, but the z became more common in late ME.

1. Voiceless s.

§ 277. OE. and AN. voiceless s generally remained,. as senden (OE. sendan), spę̄ken (OE. specan, older sprecan), fist (OE. fȳst), kissen (OE. cyssan), hous (OE. hūs), and similarly sand, singen, slēpen, smal, sonne *sun*, standen, strong, swę̄te *sweet*; asken, asse; hors, mous, was; sāven, cę̄sen *to cease*, spāce, stout; deceiven, hǫst, passen; cās *case*, pę̄s *peace.* For the voicing of initial s- in the Kentish and southern dialects, and of final -s in un-accented syllables, see §§ 236-7.

NOTE.—Initial sl- was sometimes written scl-, as sclēpen, sclain, sclender beside slēpen, slain, slender.

§ 278. AN. -(i)ss- became -(i)sch- in ME., as punischen (O.Fr. punir : puniss-), and similarly anguische, cherischen, finischen, perischen, &c. See § 289 note.

2. Voiced s.

§ 279. OE. and AN. voiced s remained, as frę̄sen (OE. frēosan) *to freeze*, rīsen (OE. rīsan), and similarly bę̄sme *besom*, chę̄sen *to choose*, rǭse; desīr, plę̄sen, prisoun, visāge, visiten, &c., cp. § 18. For the unvoicing of z (written s) see § 238.

THE GUTTURALS.

k

§ 280. Germanic k became differentiated into a guttural and a palatal k in OE., generally written c in both cases. For the cause of this differentiation see *EOE. Gr.* § 166.

1. OE. Guttural c.

§ 281. OE. guttural c remained in ME., and was generally written c before guttural vowels and l, r, and k before palatal vowels, n, and finally, and cw was generally written qu (§ 14),

as kichene (OE. cycene), kissen (OE. cyssan), cōl (OE. cōl) *cool*, corn (OE. corn), cumen (OE. cuman), bāken (OE. bacan), sinken (OE. sincan), spēken (OE. specan, older sprecan), blak (OE. blæc), bōk (OE. bōc), and similarly biquēþen, can, keie *key*, kēne, kēpen, king, clēne, clīmben, knē, knǫwen, cǫld, cǫmb, craft, crēpen, quēne, cou *cow*, cuppe; brēken, drinken, māken; stikke sticke, þikke þicke (see § 14); bak, dark, folk, milk, work; also written c in AN. words, as cacchen *to catch*, colour, commoun, doctour, escāpen, &c.

OE. Palatal c.

282. There is still some difference of opinion among scholars about what was the normal development of the OE. palatal c in ME. Some scholars assume that it became assibilated to tš in the Midland and southern dialects some time during the OE. period, but that in the northern dialects the palatalization was given up and that consequently no assibilation took place. They explain the tš-forms in the northern dialects as being importations from the other dialects, and conversely the k-forms in the Midland and southern dialects as being importations from the northern dialects. This explanation can hardly be the correct one, because the tš-forms in the oldest records of the northern dialects are so numerous, and such common everyday words, that they cannot all have been importations from the other dialects, especially at such an early period. Other scholars assume that OE. palatal c became assibilated to tš in all the dialects (but see § 284), and that the k-forms in ME. and standard NE. are either Scandinavian words (cp. § 174) or are due to Scandinavian influence caused by the Scandinavian element of the population substituting the k-sound for the tš with which they were unfamiliar, and that then some of these k-forms gradually spread beyond the Scandinavian area. This explanation is probably the correct one. It is

also possible that forms like þenken (OE. þencan) *to think*, þinken (OE. þyncan) *to seem*, sēken (OE. sēcan) *to seek*, beside þenchen, þinchen, sēchen were new formations from the early OE. syncopated forms like þencþ, þyncþ, sēcþ (see *EOE. Gr.* § 319) with regular change from the palatal to the guttural c.

§ **283.** In some southern texts ch was written for OE. palatal c in all positions as far back as the twelfth century. In the early ME. period the tš was written ch, and medially when doubled cch. Later it was written tch medially and finally. Examples are:—chẹwen (OE. cēowan) *to chew*, chīld (OE. cild), chin (OE. cinn), chicken (OE. cīcen, gen. cīcnes), fecchen (OE. feccean beside fetian), tẹchen (OE. tǣcan) *to teach*, birche (OE. birce), and similarly chẹke, chẹp, cheris *cherry*, chẹse, chīden, chile; bẹche *beech*, kichene, strecchen, chirche, crucche, hevenliche, spẹche, wicche *witch*, wrecche; dich, pich.

Note.—In kerven (OE. ceorfan) *to carve* the k of the pret. pl. and pp. was levelled out into the present.

§ **284.** Assibilation did not take place initially in the Anglian area before ME. ā̆ from early OE. (Anglian) æ = WS. ea, as caf (Angl. cæf) : chaf (WS. ceaf) *chaff*, and similarly calf : chalf, cāld cǫld : chāld chẹld *cold* (§ 71), calk : chalk.

§ **285.** In a number of words k- and ch-forms exist side by side. The k-forms occur chiefly, but not exclusively, in the ME. period in those areas where Scandinavian influence was greatest, as ic ik : ich (OE. ic) *I*, ilk : ẹch (OE. ǣlc) *each*, līk : līche (OE. līc) *like*, mikel : miche muche (OE. mycel), sẹken : sẹchen (OE. sēcan), swilk : siche suche swich (OE. swylc), þenken : þenchen (OE. þencan) *to think*, þinken : þinchen (OE. þyncan) *to seem*, quilk : which (OE. hwylc), wirken : wirchen⁻ (OE. wyrcan) *to work* (cp. § 282). For further examples see § 174.

In AN. words we also sometimes have **k-** and **ch-** side by side, because in the dialects of north Normandy and Picardy the **k-** remained unassibilated, as **calengen : chalengen** *to challenge*, **calice : chalice, catel : chatel** *property*.

§ 286. Palatal ŋc became ntš (written nch), as **benche** (OE. benc), **þenchen** (OE. þencan) *to think*, and similarly **finch, þinchen** *to seem*, **wenche**, see § 262.

§ 287. In many dialects the palatal combination **-eŋc-** became **-ein-** before **t**, with **i** to indicate the palatal nature of the combination, as **dreinte** (OE. drencte) *he drowned*, **leinten** later **lenten** (OE. lengten, lencten) *spring, Lent*, see § 263.

§ 288. AN. **ch** (= tš) remained in ME., as **chaumbre, charge, chaunce; achę̄ven, prę̄chen** *to preach*, **touchen**, &c.

<h3 style="text-align:center">sc</h3>

§ 289. In the oldest period of the language **sc**, like **k**, was guttural or palatal according as it was originally followed by a guttural or a palatal vowel (*EOE. Gr.* § 167), but some time during the OE. period the guttural **sc** became palatal, except in loan-words. **sc** became **š** in late OE. or early ME. In early ME. it was generally written **sch** or sometimes **sh** as in the *Ormulum*, also medially and finally **ssh, sch**, later **sh**, in the *Cursor Mundi* **sc**, and in Kentish **ss**. Examples are:—**schaft** (OE. sceaft), **schę̄ld** (OE. scield), **schilling** (OE. scilling), **waschen** (OE. wascan), **fisch** (OE. fisc), and similarly **schāde, schal, scharþ, schę̄wen** *to show*, **schīnen, schort; asche, wischen; englisch, flesch.** West Midland and south-western dialects **aschen** (OE. āscian, āxian, § 244) beside **asken** with later metathesis again of **ks = x** in the other dialects, and similarly **tusch** beside **tusk** = OE. tusc beside **tux**. For **sc** in loan-words see §§ 161, 175.

Note.—In the northern dialects the **š**, of whatever origin, became **s** in unaccented syllables, as **felasip** *fellowship*, **inglis**

English, and similarly in AN. words, as **blemis** *blemish*, **finis** *to finish*, &c. (cp. § 278). It also became s in unaccented words, as **sal** *shall*, **suld** *should*, which are still the usual—now accented—forms in the modern northern dialects, see *ED. Gr.* § 337.

g, ʒ

§ **290.** Germanic ʒ became g after ŋ during the prim. Germanic period. ʒj and ʒn became gg in West Germanic. Germanic ʒ remained a spirant in all other positions in the oldest period of OE. Germanic initial and medial ʒ became differentiated in prehistoric OE. into a guttural and a palatal voiced spirant under the same conditions as those by which Germanic k became differentiated into a guttural and a palatal explosive, see *EOE. Gr.* § 168.

§ **291.** Initial guttural ʒ remained in the oldest period of the language, but had become the voiced explosive g before the end of the OE. period. And then the g remained in ME. (cp. § 16), as gaderen (OE. gaderian) *to gather*, **gāte** (OE. pl. gatu), glad (OE. glædı), gọd (OE. gōd), ground (OE. grund), and similarly gilden, gilt *guilt*, glọf *glove*, god, **gǫn gān** *to go*, **gọs, gnawen, gras**. AN. g remained in ME. both initially and medially, as **gai, grāce, tīgre, vigour**.

§ **292.** OE. initial palatal ʒ remained a spirant (= the **y** in NE. yet, yon) in ME., and was written ʒ later **y**, as ʒaf (OE. geaf) *he gave*, ʒard, ʒerd (OE. geard). ʒēlden (OE. gieldan) *to recompense*, and similarly ʒellen, ʒelwe *yellow*, ʒernen, ʒesterdai, forʒę̄ten forʒiten. In OE. the guttural and palatal ʒ often existed side by side in different forms of the same word, and then at a later period one or other of the forms became generalized, as OE. pl. **gatu** beside sing. **geat**, whence ME. **gāte** beside ʒat, ʒet (cp. § 176). And similarly ME. **biginnen** had its g from the preterite and past participle. In a few words the English and Scandinavian forms existed side by side in ME., as **forʒę̄ten forʒiten** (OE. forgietan) beside **gę̆ten** (ON. geta), and

similarly ȝ**ĕ**ven, ȝiven beside **given**, northern **gif**, ȝift beside **gift**, see § 176.

§ 293. Initial ȝi- became i- (later written **y-**) through the intermediate stage ī-, as **icchen**, older ȝicchen (OE. **gicc(e)an** *to itch*. if beside older ȝif. And similarly the OE. prefix ge- became ȝi- and then later i- (y-), see § 240, as **iwis ywis** (OE. **gewiss**) *certain*, inọuȝ ynọuȝ (OE. **genōg, genōh**) *enough*, and in past participles, as **islain, iclad**. This prefix of the pp. generally disappeared in the northern dialects and often also in the Midland.

§ 294. The g in the combination ŋg remained guttural or became palatal in OE. according as it was originally followed by a guttural or a palatal vowel or j (*EOE. Gr.* § 168).

OE. guttural ŋg (written ng) remained in ME., as **bringen** (OE. **bringan**), **hunger** (OE. **hungor**), **lang long** (OE. **lang, long**), and similarly **England, finger, singen, tonge tunge**; **king, ring, þing**.

OE. palatal ŋg became assibilⁿted to ndž (written **ng**) in late OE. or early ME., as **crengen** (OE. **creng(e)an) *to cringe*, **sengen singen** (OE. **seng(e)an**) *to singe*.

§ 295. In many dialects the OE. palatal combination -eŋg- became -ein- before d, þ with i to denote the palatal nature of the n. The ei then later became e, as pret. **meinde** (OE. **mengde**) *he mixed*, **leinþe** later **lenþe** (OE. **lengþu**) *length*, **streinþe** later **strenþe** (OE. **strengþu**) *strength*, see §§ 238, 263.

§ 296. West Germanic gg became differentiated into guttural gg and palatal gg in OE. under the same conditions as those by which Germanic k became differentiated into a guttural and palatal explosive.

OE. guttural gg remained in ME., as **dogge** (OE. **dogga**), and similarly **frogge, hogge, stagge**, and also in ON. loan-words like **draggen** *to drag*, **draw, haggen** *to hew*. **waggen** *to wag, shake*, &c.

OE. palatal gg (written **cg,** often also **cge, cg**i) became

assibilated to dž in late OE. or early ME., and was written
gge later dge, as brigge (OE. brycg), cuggele (OE. cycgel),
and similarly egge, hegge, migge, rigge, wegge. The
southern dialects had the regular forms in the verbs, as
biggen büggen beggen (OE. bycgan) *to buy*, leggen (OE.
lecg(e)an) *to lay*, and similarly liggen *to lie down*, seggen
ziggen (Ken.) *to say*, but bȳen *to buy*, leien *to lay*, lȳen *to
lie down*, seien sai *to say*, in the Midland and northern
dialects were new formations from the second and third pers.
sing. of the present.

NOTE.—There is both in ME. and in the modern dialects of the
northern, Midland and eastern counties a number of words with
the explosive g where we should regularly expect dž, as brig,
fligd *fledged*, lig *to lie down*, rig *back, ridge*, seg *sedge*. The g in
these words is no doubt due to Scandinavian influence as the
forms only occur in those areas where that influence was strong,
cp. § 235.

§ 297. The dž (written j, g initially and g, gg medially)
remained in AN. words, as cāge, chargen; generāl,
joinen, juge, juggen, plege plegge.

§ 298. OE. medial guttural ʒ (written g) remained in early
ME. after guttural vowels and liquids, but became vocalized
to u-consonant (written w) before the end of the twelfth
century except in Kentish where the change did not take
place until about 1400, and then the w combined with a
preceding guttural vowel to form a diphthong of the u-type,
but ū (written ou, ow) if the preceding vowel was ŭ, as
draʒen, drawen (OE. dragan) *to draw*, haʒe, hawe (OE.
hagu) *haw*, see § 110, 3 ; āʒen, awe, ǫwen (OE. āgan) *to
possess*, see § 110, 4 and § 113, 3 ; bǫʒe, bǫue bǫwe (OE.
boga) *bow*, pl. trǫʒes, trǫwes (OE. trogas) *troughs*, see
§ 113, 2 ; pl. bōʒes, bǫwes (OE. bōgas) *boughs*, drōʒen,
drǫwen (OE. drōgon) *they drew*, see § 114, 2 (*b*) ; fuʒel, fūel,
fou(e)l (OE. fugol) *bird, fowl*, see § 122, 5 ; būʒen, būen,
bouen bowen (OE. būgan) *to bend*, see § 122, 6 ; belǫwes

(OE. pl. belgas) *bellows* (cp. § 152, 2), berȝen, berwen (OE. beorgan) *to protect* ; folȝen, folwen (OE. folgian) *to follow*, halȝen, halwen (OE. hālgian) *to hallow*. morȝen, morwe(n) (OE. morgen) *morning, morrow*, sorȝe, sorwe (OE. sorh, sorg, gen. sorge) *sorrow*, swelȝen, swelwen, swolwen (OE. swelgan) *to swallow*, wirȝen, wirwen (OE. wyrgan) *to strangle*.

§ 299. The vocalization of palatal ȝ to i-consonant took place already in late OE. after palatal vowels finally and before consonants, and in early ME. also medially between vowels, and then the i-consonant combined with a preceding palatal vowel to form a diphthong of the i-type, but ī if the preceding vowel was ĭ, as mai (OE. mæg, later mæi) *he may*, maȝen, mȩin (OE. mægen) *power*, saide (OE. sægde) *he said*, see § 106 ; wei (OE. weg, later wei) *way*, pleȝen, pleien (OE. plegian) *to play*, see § 107, 1 ; clei (OE. clæg) *clay*, pret. pl. leien (OE. lǣgon) *they lay*, see § 107, 5 ; dēȝen, deien, dīen (late OE. dēgian) *to dye*, ȩȝe, eie, ȳe (late OE. ēge) *eye*, flēȝen, fleien, flȳen (late OE. flēgan, earlier flēogan) *to fly*, see §§ 107, 6, 108 ; stiȝele, stīle (OE. stigel) *style*, see § 122, 1 ; stīȝen, stīen (OE. stīgan) *to ascend*, see § 122, 2.

For the vocalization of OE. final -ig in unaccented syllables and of g between r and a following vowel see §§ 138, 240.

h

§ 300. OE. initial h (except in the combination hw) was an aspirate like the h in NE. hand, but with a strong emission of breath between the h and the following vowel or consonant. Initial hw was pronounced ꭓw, like the wh in many modern Scottish dialects. In all other positions h, including hh, was a guttural or a palatal spirant according as it was originally followed by a guttural or a palatal vowel or j, cp. *EOE. Gr.* §§ 166, 174.

§ 301. OE. initial **h** remained in ME. before accented vowels, as **hous** (OE. **hūs**), **hęlen** (OE. **hǽlan**) *to heal*, and similarly **hām hǫm** *home*, **hand hond**, **hard, hāre** *hare*, **helpen, herte** *heart*, **hound**. But before unaccented vowels it often disappeared, especially in pronominal forms, as **em, im**, it beside accented **hem** *them*, **him, hit**; and in unaccented forms it was sometimes wrongly inserted, as **hart, his** = **art** (v.), **is**. This indicates that the **h**· either had a very weak articulation or had ceased to be pronounced.

§ 302. AN. initial **h** was not pronounced, and accordingly it was often omitted in the writing of such loan-words as **habit abit, hāste āste, heire eire** *heir*, **honest onest, honour onour, houre oure** *hour*.

§ 303. OE. **hw** came to be written **qu, qv, quh, qw, qwh** in the northern dialects, especially the Scottish, and **wh** in the Midland and southern dialects (cp. §17). This difference in the spelling indicates that the χ in χw was pronounced with greater force in the northern than in the other dialects, and it is also attested by the modern dialects which have χw in the former, but **w** in the latter, see *ED. Gr.* § 240. Examples are : **what : quat qvat quhat** (OE. **hwæt**), **whǫ whǫ : quā qvā quhā** (OE. **hwā**), and similarly **whīle, whīte**, &c.

§ 304. Initial **h**· disappeared before **l, n, r**, but these combinations were often written **lh, nh, rh** in early ME., especially in Kentish, as **lępen** (OE. **hlēapan**) *to leap*, **nute** (OE. **hnutu**) *nut*, **ring** (OE. **hring**), and similarly **ladder, lauȝen** *to laugh*, **lid, lǫf** *loaf*, **lot, neien** *to neigh*, **rāven**, &c.

§ 305. Medial and final **hs** (= χs) had become **ks** (written **x**) in the oldest period of the language, as **waxen** (OE. **weaxan**, Goth. **wahsjan**) *to grow*, **six** (OE. **siex, six**, Goth. **saíhs**) *six*, and similarly **flax, fox, oxe**, &c.

§ 306. Intervocalic **h** (= Germanic χ) disappeared in the prehistoric period of the language (*EOE. Gr.* § 144). OE.

medial **hh** was simplified to **h** in ME. and was written ȝ, ȝh, **gh, hȝ,** &c., as lauȝen laughen (Anglian hlæhha(n)) beside liȝhen lihȝen leihȝen (early WS. hliehhan, later hlihhan, **hlyhhan**) *to laugh,* cǫuȝen cǫughen (OE. **cohhettan**) *to cough.*

§ 307. The **h** in the OE. combination **ht** was guttural or palatal according as it was preceded by a guttural or a palatal vowel, and this distinction was generally preserved in ME., see §§ 107, 4 ; 110, 5, 6 ; 113, 4, 5. In ME. the **ht** was generally written ȝt, ȝht, ght, rarely ct. Examples are : dǫuȝter dǫughter (OE. **dohtor**) *daughter,* pp. fǫuȝten **fǫughten** (OE. **fohten**) *fought,* pret. bǫuȝte bǫughte *he bought,* pp. bǫuȝt bǫught (OE. **bohte, boht**), and similarly brǫuȝte, ·brǫuȝt ; sǫuȝte, sǫuȝt ; wrǫuȝte, wrǫuȝt. auȝt **aught,** aȝt aght (OE. **āht**) *aught, anything,* pret. teiȝte **teighte** (OE. **tæhte**) beside tauȝte, taȝte, Orm tahhte (OE. **tāhte)** *he taught,* pret. **fauȝt,** faȝt (late Anglian **fæht**) beside feiȝt (late WS. **feht**) *he fought,* auȝte aughte, aȝte aghte (late Anglian **æhta**) beside eiȝte **eighte** (late WS. **ehta**) *eight,* and similarly lauȝter **laughter,** slauȝter **slaughter, strauȝte straughte** *he stretched.* feiȝten **feighten** older **fehten** beside fiȝten (Orm **fihhten**) *to fight.* For examples of late OE. **i** + **ht** see § 46.

NOTE.—The palatal spirantal element began to disappear in pronunciation from about the end of the fourteenth century in the south Midland and southern dialects, and the guttural spirantal element began to disappear or become **f** in these dialects during the fifteenth century.

§ 308. OE. postvocalic final **·h,** which was guttural or **palatal** according as it was preceded by a guttural or a palatal vowel, generally remained in ME. and was written **h,** ȝ, **ȝh, gh,** and occasionally **c, g,** see §§ 107, 4 ; 109 ; 110, 5 ; 113, 4 ; and **114, 115.** Examples are : dāȝ **dāgh,** dǫuȝ **dǫugh** (OE. **dāh, dāg)** *dough,* pret. sauȝ **saugh,** saȝ **sagh** (late Anglian **sæh**) beside seiȝ **seigh** (late WS. **seh**) *he saw.* trǫuȝ trǫugh

(OE. troh, trog) *trough*. bǫuʒ bǫugh later bǫuʒ bǫugh (OE. bōh) *bough* (§ 114, 2), and similarly inǫuʒ inǫugh, plǫuʒ plǫugh, þǫuʒ þǫugh *though*. heiʒ heigh beside hīʒ hīgh (late OE. hēh) *high*, þeiʒ þeigh beside þīʒ þīgh (late OE. þēh) *thigh*. ME. fę̄ *cattle, money* beside feh feiʒ (OE. feoh, gen. fēos) was a new formation from the inflected forms where intervocalic h regularly disappeared (*EOE. Gr.* § 144), and similarly schǭ (OE. scōh, gen. scōs) *shoe*.

§ 309. OE. final -h after liquids generally remained in ME., as þurh þurʒ (OE. þurh) *through*, cp. § 241. Forms like holu *hollow* beside holʒ (OE. holh, gen. holwes) were new formations from the inflected forms, and similarly with forms like sę̄le (OE. seolh, gen. sēoles) *a seal* (cp. § 134 (*a*)).

ACCIDENCE

CHAPTER VII

THE DECLENSION OF NOUNS

§ 310. ME. nouns have two numbers: singular and plural; three genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter; four cases: nominative, accusative, genitive, and dative. The vocative is like the nominative, as in OE.

§ 311. In ME. as in OE. nouns are divided into two great classes, according as the stem originally ended in a vowel or a consonant. Nouns whose stems originally ended in a vowel belong to the vocalic or so-called strong declension. Those whose stems originally ended in -n belong to the so-called weak or n-declension. All other consonantal stems are generally put together under the general heading 'Minor Declensions'.

§ 312. In OE. nouns whose stems originally ended in a vowel are subdivided into four declensions. The first or a-declension comprises masculine and neuter nouns only, and includes pure a-stems, ja-stems, and wa-stems. The second or ō-declension contains feminine nouns only, and includes pure ō-stems, jō-stems, and wō-stems. The third or i-declension comprises masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns. The fourth or u-declension comprises masculine and feminine nouns only. The neuter nouns of the a-declension had the same case-endings in the singular and plural as the masculine, except that the nominative and accusative plural of the neuter nouns ended in -u (-o) or had no ending, and the masculine nouns ended in -as. In the plural the genitive had the ending -a (-en-a) and the dative the ending -um in all four declensions (see § 259).

§ 313. These declensions underwent such radical changes in passing from OE. to ME. that in ME. it is no longer practicable to classify the strong declension of nouns according to the vowels in which the stems originally ended. We shall therefore adopt the plan of subdividing it into three declensions according to the gender of the nouns in OE., viz. (1) the declension of masculine nouns, (2) the declension of neuter nouns, and (3) the declension of feminine nouns. The chief cause of the breaking up of the OE. system of the declension of nouns was that in passing from OE. to ME. all the OE. vowels of the case-endings were weakened to e (§ 134). The result of this weakening of all vowels to e was that many different case-endings fell together, and that in some instances different declensions fell entirely together, e.g. the feminine ō- and u-declensions, the declension of the masculine and feminine weak nouns.

§ 314. With this weakening of all the vowels to e is also closely connected the loss of grammatical gender in nouns, which was partly due to the breaking up of the old declensions themselves, and partly to the weakening or loss of the inflexional endings in the definite article, the demonstrative pronouns, and the adjectives. It was in a great measure due to the changes which these latter parts of speech underwent in late OE. and early ME. that grammatical gender had become lost in all the dialects by about the end of the fourteenth century ; cp. the opposite process in MHG. and NHG., where grammatical gender has been mainly preserved through the preservation of the inflexional endings in these parts of speech. This loss of grammatical gender did not take place concurrently in all the dialects. The process began much earlier in the northern than in the other dialects. Even in the OE. period both the gender and declension of nouns fluctuated considerably in the Northumbrian as compared with the other dialects. It had almost entirely disappeared in the Midland dialects by the end of the twelfth or

early part of the thirteenth century, in the south-western dialects by the middle of the thirteenth century, and in the south-eastern dialects, including Kentish, in the latter part of the fourteenth century.

§ 315. One of the most characteristic differences between OE. and ME. is the breaking up of the old system of declensions, the substitution of natural for grammatical gender, and the gradual spreading of the endings of the genitive singular and of the nominative and accusative plural of the old masculine a-declension to the types of nouns which did not regularly have these endings in OE., viz. to the ō-stems, the feminine and neuter i-stems, the u-stems, the n-stems, most of the other old consonant stems, and the plural of the old neuter a-stems. Some of these changes began to take place during the late OE. period, especially in Northumbrian. Even at that early period the plural ending -as of the masculine a- and i-declensions was often extended to the neuter a-stems, the masculine short u-stems, and the masculine nouns belonging to the ' Minor Declensions ', and in late Northumbrian it also began to be extended to the feminine ō- and i-stems as well as to the n-stems after the loss of the final -n in the tenth century. In late OE. the plural ending in -en (-an) was sometimes even extended to old strong nouns. This was especially common in the southern dialects.

§ 316. This gradual extension of the s-plural was continued during the ME. period until it eventually became general for all classes of nouns except a few old neuter a-stems (§ 331), and mutated plurals like fēt, men (§ 346), but this radical change in the formation of the plural did not take place at the same pace in all the dialects. In the northern and north Midland dialects it had spread to all classes of nouns by the end of the twelfth century. In the south Midland dialects it had become the general rule from about 1250 for strong nouns of all genders, and often also for weak nouns. Many

weak nouns, however, preserved the old plural ending in -n, which was also sometimes extended to the strong nouns, but by the time of Chaucer the s-plural had with few exceptions been extended to all classes of nouns. In the southern dialects the history of the formation of the plural was somewhat different from that in the other dialects. The neuter nouns of the a-declension took the plural ending -es in early ME., but strong feminines and the masculine short i- and u-stems gradually took the n-plural after the analogy of the weak nouns. During the thirteenth century the reverse process set in, and from then onwards the s-plural gradually encroached upon the n-plural and through the loss of the final -e-n towards the end of the fourteenth century it rapidly gained ground until in the fifteenth century it became general for all classes of nouns.

§ 317. In OE. the a- and the masculine and neuter i-stems regularly had the ending -es in the genitive singular, but the ō- and feminine i-stems had -e, the u-stems -a, and the n-stems -an, which became weakened down to -e, -en in early ME. (§ 134). Parallel with the gradual extension of the s-plural to all classes of nouns also went that of the genitive ending -es, but genitives without -(e)s in those types of nouns which did not have it in OE. are occasionally found throughout the ME. period, and a few such genitives are still preserved in NE., as **Friday, Lady day** beside **Thursday, the Lord's day**. The e in -es was generally written, but not pronounced after secondary accented syllables of trisyllabic forms, as **felawęs, housbondęs, bodięs, lādięs**, &c.

§ 318. During the ME. period the preposition of came to be used before the nominative and accusative singular to express the genitival relationship, and similarly the preposition to to express the dative.

§ 319. The nominative and accusative plural were always alike in OE. and so also in ME. In OE. the genitive plural of all strong nouns, of whatever gender, ended in -a (= ME.

-e), except the pure ō-stems which had -ena (= ME. -ene)
beside -a. The genitive plural of weak nouns ended in -ena
(= ME. -ene). And the dative plural of all nouns, of what-
ever gender and declension, ended in -um, late OE. -un, -on,
-an (= ME. -en), see § 259. The endings -ene and -en
remained for a time in ME. in those nouns which had the
weak ending -en (= OE. -an) in the nominative and accusative
plural. But in those nouns where -(e)s had come to be used
for the nominative and accusative plural, the -(e)s was
gradually extended to the genitive and dative, that is to say
the nominative and accusative came to be used for the
genitive and dative.

§ 320. Trisyllabic inflected forms with -el-, -en-, -er-
generally syncopated the medial -e-, as **foules, apples,
wintres, fingres, fadres, mǫdres** (cp. § 102). But when
the medial -el-, -en-, -er- were preceded by m, v, þ the
medial -e- was retained in writing, but not in pronuncia-
tion, as **hamęres, devęles, hevęnes, brǫþęres**. All nouns
ending in f, s, þ changed these to v, z (written s), and ð
(written þ) in the inflected forms. Original medial double
consonants were generally simplified when they came to
stand finally, as gen. **hilles, mannes, pottes** beside nom.
hil, man, pot. With rare exceptions the Anglo-Norman
nouns were inflected in ME. like the native English nouns
which in OE. belonged to the masculine a-declension, that
is, the genitive singular ended in -es, the dative in -e, and
the plural in -es.

A. THE VOCALIC or STRONG DECLENSION

1. MASCULINE NOUNS.

§ 321. To this declension belong: (a) the OE. masculine
a-, ja-, and **wa-**stems; (b) the OE. masculine i-stems; and
(c) the OE. masculine u-stems. In OE. the nominative and
accusative singular of the **a**-stems, the **ja**-stems with an

original short stem-syllable, and the long i- and u-stems generally ended in a consonant, as stān *stone*, dæg *day*, mearh *horse*, scōh *shoe*; hyll *hill*, mycg *midge*; dǣl *part*, giest *guest*, wyrm *worm*; fę̄ld *field*, sumor *summer*; but the nominative and accusative singular of the ja-stems with an original long stem-syllable, the short i- and u-stems ended in a vowel, as ende *end*, drincere *drinker*; wine *friend*, stede *place*; sunu *son*, wudu *wood*. This difference in the ending of the nominative and accusative singular was regularly preserved in nearly all the nouns in ME.

§ 322. In passing from OE. to ME. the following changes took place in the nom. and acc. singular: nouns like dæg came to end in a diphthong, as dai (pl. daies beside dawes), wei (OE. weg), which also sometimes took -e from the inflected forms, as daie (daye), weie (weye, *Ormulum* weȝȝe). Nouns of the type mearh, scōh, mycg came to end in a vowel through having been remodelled after the analogy of the inflected forms, as mę̄re (OE. mearh, gen. mēares), schǫ (OE. scōh, gen. scōs), migge (OE. mycg, gen. mycges). In late ME. a mute -e was sometimes added to monosyllables ending in a single consonant and containing a long vowel in order to indicate that the preceding vowel was long, as stǫne *stone*, strę̄me *stream*, beside stǫn, strę̄m (§ 11). Final -u was weakened to -e (§ 134).

§ 323. ME. nouns ending in a consonant; and generally also those ending in a diphthong, took -es (also sometimes written -us, -is, -ys, see § 134) in the gen. singular, as stǫnes, daies beside dais, and those ending in a vowel took -s, as schǫs, sę̄s *seas*. In early ME. the dat. singular ended in -e (§ 141). This -e was retained when the nom. and acc. ended in -e, but when they did not end in -e they came to be used for the dative also, as nom. acc. and dat. sing. stǫn, schǫ, dai. Trisyllabic forms containing medial -el-, -en-, -er- generally syncopated the medial -e-, as gen. apples, fingres beside nom. appel, finger (cp. § 102).

§ 324. Through the weakening of the OE. ending ·as to ·es in ME. the ending of the nom. and acc. plural came to be like that of the gen. singular. The OE. gen. plural ending ·a and the dat. ending ·um (= late OE. ·un, ·on, ·an, § 259) were weakened to ·e and ·en which remained in the transition period, but already in early ME. they were supplanted by the nominative and accusative, and thus all cases of the plural came to be alike.

§ 325. **stǫn** *stone*, **engel** *angel*, **ende** *end*, and **sone** *son* will serve as models for the nouns belonging to this declension.

§ 326.

		ME.	OE.	ME.	OE.
Sing. Nom.	Acc.	stǫn	stān	engel	engel
	Gen.	stǫnes	stānes	engles	engles
	Dat.	stǫn(e)	stāne	engle	engle
Plural Nom.	Acc.	stǫnes	stānas	engles	englas
	Gen.	stǫnes	stāna	engles	engla
	Dat.	stǫnes	stānum	engles	englum

§ 327. Like **stǫn** are declined a large number of nouns, as **arm, bǫt, brǫm, cǫmb, craft, dǫm, fisch, gǫst** *ghost*, **hail, hǫm, hound, king, nail, rein** *rain*, **rǫp, roum** *room*, **schaft, stǫl, storm, swan, trǫȝh, wind,** &c. ; and similarly old long wa·stems, as **snǫw, dęw**; old long i·stems, as **dęl, dint, gest, fliȝt, pliȝt, wurm**; old long u·stems, as **fęld, fǫrd, þorn,** &c. Nouns ending in a voiceless spirant changed it to the corresponding voiced spirant in the inflected forms, as **þęf** *thief*, **mouþ,** gen. **þęves, mouþes,** and similarly **lǫf** *loaf*, **knīf, staf, wolf, ǫþ** *oath*, **paþ**. Medial double consonants were simplified when they came to stand finally, as gen. **briddes, hilles, pittes, walles,** beside nom. **brid,** &c.

§ 328. Like **engel** are declined nouns ending in ·el, ·en, ·er, as **appel, crādel, girdel, hunger, sadel, þimbel, þunder**. But when the ·el, ·en, ·er were preceded by m or v the medial ·e· was written in the inflected forms, but was not

pronounced, as gen. **hamẹres, hevẹnes,** dat. **hamẹre, hevẹne :** nom. **hamer, heven.**

§ 329.

		ME.	OE.	ME.	OE.
Sing. Nom.	Acc.	ende	ende	sone	sunu
	Gen.	endes	endes	sones	suna
	Dat.	ende	ende	sone	suna
Plural Nom.	Acc.	endes	endas	sones	suna
	Gen.	endes	enda	sones	suna
	Dat.	endes	endum	sones	sunum

And similarly **mẹre māre** *horse,* **sẹle** *seal* (animal) ; old ja-stems like **migge** *midge,* **rigge** *back,* **wegge** *wedge* ; **herde** *shepherd,* **whẹte** ; **bākere, drinkere, fischere** ; old short i-stems, as **bile** *bill,* **bite, dẹne** *valley,* **stiche** ; old short u-stems, as **mẹde** *mead,* **spite** *spit,* '*veru*', **wode wude** *wood.*

§ 330. Nouns ending in a vowel other than -e had simply -s in the gen. singular and in the plural, and no -e in the dat. singular, as **flẹ** *flea,* gen. **flẹs,** dat. **flẹ,** pl. **flẹs,** and similarly **schō** *shoe,* **sẹ** *sea,* **peni** (inflected **penịẹs, penes**). **dai** and **wei** were also similarly inflected, as **dais,** dat. sing **dai.**

2. Neuter Nouns.

§ 331. To this declension belong : (*a*) the OE. neuter a-, ja-, and wa-stems, and (*b*) the OE. neuter i-stems. These stems were inflected in OE. exactly like the corresponding masculine stems except in the nom. and acc. plural. In OE. the nom. and acc. plural of neuter stems ended either in -u or had no ending (*EOE. Gr.* § 188), whereas the masculine stems ended in -**as** (= ME. -**es**). Therefore in treating the neuter nouns it is only necessary to take into consideration the formation of the plural.

1. When the singular ended in a consonant the plural was generally formed by adding -es after the analogy of the old masculine a-declension, as **word,** pl. **wordes,** and similarly

bak, barn, bǫn, bǫrd, horn, land, nest, schip, werk; lẹf
leaf, pl. lẹves, and similarly baþ, hous, līf, &c. ; water, pl.
watres, and similarly tǫken, wonder, but pl. maidens
never maidnes in Chaucer ; ja-stems, as bed, pl. beddes,
and similarly bil, den, kin, net, rib, web ; long i-stems, as
flẹsch, pl. flẹsches, and similarly flẹs *fleece,* hilt, &c.

Monosyllabic nouns with a long stem-syllable denoting
collectivity, weight, measure, and time generally remained
uninflected in the plural just as in OE., as dẹr *deer,* folk,
nẹt *cattle,* pound, schẹp, swīn, ʒẹr ʒẹr *year,* &c., cp. NE.
deer, sheep, swine, five-pound note. This rule practically
agrees with that in the modern dialects. In all the modern
dialects nouns denoting collectivity, time, space, weight,
measure, and number when immediately preceded by a
cardinal number generally remain unchanged in the plural,
see *ED. Gr.* § 382.

2. When the singular ended in a vowel or a diphthong in
ME. the plural took -s after the analogy of the corresponding
old masculine nouns, as cǫle *coal,* pl. cǫles, and similarly
dāle, gāte, hǫle, ʒǫke (§ 103), fẹ (OE. feoh, gen. fēos)
cattle ; old long ja-stems, as ẹrende *errand,* flicche, stẹle
steel ; old wa-stems, as mẹle *meal, flour,* tẹre *tar* ; knẹ, trẹ,
strẹẹ beside straw (OE. strēa beside gen. *strawes) ; short
i-stems, as sive *sieve,* spẹre *spear,* &c.

3. Feminine Nouns.

§ 332. To this declension belong : (*a*) the OE. ō-, jō-, and
wō-stems ; (*b*) the OE. feminine i-stems ; and (*c*) the OE.
feminine u-stems. After the OE. final vowels had been
weakened to -e the following changes took place in the types
of nouns belonging to this declension : In the ō- and jō-stems
which in OE. ended in a consonant the -e of the oblique
cases was levelled out into the nominative, as bǫte *advan-*
tage, sǫule, henne = OE. bōt, sāwol, henn. In the wō-

stems we have double forms in ME. according as the old nominative or accusative singular became generalized, as short **wō**-stems **schāde** (= OE. nom. sceadu) beside **schadwe** (= OE. acc. sceadwe), **sine** (= OE. nom. sinu, sionu) beside **sinewe** (= OE. acc. sinwe) *sinew*; long **wō**-stems, as **mēde** with -e from the inflected forms (= OE. nom. mǣd) beside **medwe medewe** (= OE. acc. mǣdwe) *meadow*. In the i-stems the -e of the gen. and dat. was levelled out into the nom. and accusative, as **quēne** (= OE. nom. acc. cwēn, gen. and dat. cwēne). In the long u-stems the -e (= OE. -a) of the gen. and dat. was not levelled out into the nom. and accusative, as nom. acc. **hand, flōr, quern** = OE. hand, flōr, cweorn *hand-mill*. The -e of the oblique cases was also not levelled out into the nominative or respectively into the nominative and accusative of other stems ending in -ing (-ung), -st, -ȝt, as **lerning, fist, miȝt** = OE. leornung, fȳst, miht. With the exception of the types of nouns just mentioned, all the other types belonging to this declension regularly have -e from older -u in the nominative, as **tāle** (= OE. talu), **love** (= OE. lufu), &c.

§ 333. In early Northumbrian, and then later also in WS. and Kentish, the acc. sing. of the i-stems often had -e after the analogy of the ō-stems. The genitive ending -(e)s of the strong masc. and neut. nouns was gradually extended to the feminine, but throughout the ME. period forms without -s are sometimes found. Feminine nouns denoting animate objects generally had the ending -(e)s, whereas abstract nouns and nouns denoting inanimate objects mostly or often had simply -e. The nom. and acc. of those nouns which in ME. ended in a consonant came to be used for the dative at an early period, as **hand, lerning, fist,** &c. Chaucer has the dat. **honde** beside **hond**. The plural ending of the OE. masculine a- and i-declensions was gradually extended to the strong feminines. The strong feminines had begun to take the s-plural in Northumbrian already in the late OE. period,

as **saules, dēdes**, &c. The strong feminines regularly formed their plural in -(e)s in Chaucer, but the southern dialects of the fourteenth century mostly had -en after the analogy of the n-declension. Later on, however, the plural in these dialects also took the ending -(e)s. See §§ 315–17.

§ 334. **tāle** *number, tale*, **while** *time*, **quēne** *queen*, and **hand** will serve as models for the nouns belonging to this declension.

§ 335.

Sing.	ME.	OE.	ME.	OE.	ME.	OE.
Nom.	tāle	talu	whīle	hwīl	quēne	cwēn
Acc.	tāle	tale	whīle	hwīle	quēne	cwēn
Gen.	tāle(s)	tale	whīle(s)	hwīle	quēne(s)	cwēne
Dat.	tāle	tale	whīle	hwīle	quēne	cwēne

Plural						
Nom. Acc.	tāles	tala, -e	whīles	hwīla, -e	quēnes	cwēne,
Gen.	tāles	tala, -ena	whīles	hwīla, -ena	quēnes	cwēna
Dat.	tāles	talum (§ 259)	whīles	hwīlum	quēnes	cwēnum

§ 336. Like **tāle** are declined the OE. ō-stems with a short stem-syllable, as **cāre**, *love*, **schāme**, **wrāke** *vengeance*; the OE. abstract nouns in -þu, as **lengþe, strengþe**; the OE. wō-stems with a short stem-syllable, as **schāde (schadwe), sine (sinewe)**; and the OE. short u-stems, as **dore** *dure*, **nǫse**.

§ 337. Like **whīle** are declined the OE. ō-stems which did not have -u in the nom. singular, as **fetere, feþere, glǫve, lǫre, nędle, netele, sorwe, sǫule, wounde**; the OE. jō-stems, as **brigge** *bridge*, **cribbe, egge** *edge*, **helle, henne, sibbe** *relationship*, **sille, sinne**; **blisse, hīnde** *doe*, **hǫlinesse, reste**; the OE. long wō-stems, **męde (medwe), stǫwe**.

§ 338. Like **quēne** are declined the OE. feminine i-stems, as **benche, brīde, dęde, hīde, hīve, nęde** *need*, **spęde** *success*, **tīde**.

§ 339.

		ME.	OE.
Sing.	Nom. Acc.	hand	hand
	Gen.	hande(s)	handa
	Dat.	hand(e)	handa
Plural	Nom. Acc.	handes	handa
	Gen.	handes	handa
	Dat.	handes	handum (§ 259)

§ 340. Like hand hond are declined the OE. feminine long u-stems, as flọr, quern *hand-mill*; the OE. abstract nouns in -ung (-ing) and nouns ending in -st, -ht, as blessing, ẹvening, lerning, fist, miȝt. The plural hend *hands*, which was common in the northern dialects, was of ON. origin (O.Icel. hend-r).

B. THE WEAK or N-DECLENSION

§ 341. This declension contained in OE. masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns. It contained a large number of masculine and feminine nouns, but only three neuter nouns all of which denote parts of the body, viz. ēage *eye*, ēare *ear*, and wange *cheek*. The only distinction between the masculines and the feminines in OE. was that the nominative singular of the former ended in -a, and that of the latter in -e. After the -a had been weakened to -e in the nom. singular of the masculines the two classes of nouns had the same endings in all cases of the singular and plural. So that the early ME. case-endings were :—

	ME.	OE.
Sing. Nom.	-e	-a, -e
Acc. Gen. Dat.	-en	-an
Plural Nom. Acc.	-en	-an
Gen.	-ene	-ena
Dat.	--en	-um (§ 259)

The following changes took place:—The -e of the nom.

singular supplanted the ·en (= OE. ·an) of the oblique cases
of the singular, and then later ·s was added for the gen.
singular. The singular thus fell together with the old
masculine, feminine, and neuter strong nouns whose nom.
singular ended in ·e in ME. The extension of ·(e)s from the
old strong masculines and neuters of the a· and i·declensions
to the nouns of this declension took place earlier in the
masculines than in the feminines. And in the masculines
it took place earlier in nouns denoting animate objects than
in those denoting inanimate objects. In Chaucer the old
feminines generally have ·(e)s in the gen. singular, but
forms like gen. lādy, sonne, widwe also occur. The old
·en plurals remained much longer in the southern and
Kentish dialects than in the Midland and northern. In the
former dialects the ·en plural was often extended to nouns
which were strong in OE. and even also to Anglo-Norman
words. This was especially common with the gen. plural
ending ·ene (= OE. ·ena) of the OE. ō and n-declensions.
On the other hand the ·en plural was supplanted by the
·(e)s plural at an early period in the northern and north
Midland dialects. For the approximate dates at which the
change from the weak to the strong declension took place in
the separate dialects, see § 316.

§ 342. The three OE. neuter nouns ēage, ēare, wange =
ME. ę̄ȝe, eye, ȳe (§ 107, 6), ę̄re, wange (wonge) were in-
flected in ME. like the old masculine and feminine weak
nouns. The old masculine and feminine contracted weak
nouns were inflected in ME. just like the uncontracted nouns,
as flē̆ (OE. flēa) *flea*, pl. flē̆s, flē̆n, and similarly fǭ *foe,* rǭ
roe ; bē̆ (OE. bēo) *bee,* pl. bē̆s, bē̆n, and similarly slǭ *sloe,*
tǭ *toe.*

§ 343. Examples of OE. masculine nouns which belong
to this declension in ME. are: āpe, asse, bę̄re, bǫwe
(OE. boga) *bow,* bukke, dogge, fǭle, frogge, hāre, lippe,
mǫne, nāme, oxe, sterre *star,* þoumbe *thumb,* &c. And

of feminine nouns : asche, belle, bladdre, chẹke, chirche, cuppe, harpe, herte, moþþe, oule, pīpe, sonne, swalwe, tonge tunge, þrǫte, widewe, wolle *wool.* lādi older lavdie, lavedie (OE. hlǣfdige) lost its final -e at an early period, cp. Orm's laffdiȝ (§ 154), and similarly pley (OE. plega).

§ 344. Only a small number of the old plurals in -en are found in Chaucer, as hǫsen, oxen ; in a few words he has weak and strong forms side by side, as aschen, bẹẹn, flẹẹn, fǫǫn, tǫǫn beside asches, bẹẹs, flẹẹs, fǫǫs, tǫǫs, and in the old strong noun schǫǫn beside schǫǫs.

C. THE MINOR DECLENSIONS

§ 345. The nouns belonging to these categories are all old consonant stems, and include nouns belonging to all genders. In treating their history in ME. we shall follow the same order as in the *EOE. Gr.* §§ 255-67.

1. Monosyllabic Consonant Stems.

a. Masculine.

§ 346. The nouns of this type had umlaut in the dat. singular and the nom. acc. plural, otherwise the case-endings were the same as in the OE. masculine a-declension. In ME. a new dat. singular in -e without umlaut was formed after the analogy of nouns like stǫn, as fǫte beside OE. fēt. The OE. umlauted form of the nom. acc. plural remained and also came to be used for the dative, to which was then added the ending -es to form a new genitive, as nom. acc. dat. fẹt, gen. fẹtes beside OE. nom. acc. fēt, gen. fōta, dat. fōtum, and similarly man, gen. mannes, pl. men; wim(m)an wum(m)an wom(m)an, pl. wim(m)en, &c. ; tǫþ, pl. tẹþ.

b. Feminine.

§ 347. The nouns of this type had umlaut in the dat. singular, and many also had it in the genitive, as dat. sing.

bēc, hnyte, gen. bēc beside bōce, hnute. These cases
were remodelled in ME. after the analogy of the old
a-declension, as nom. acc. bǫk, note nute *nut*, gen. bǫkes,
notes, dat. bǫke, note. In OE. the nom. acc. plural had
umlaut, as bēc, hnyte, otherwise the case-endings of the
plural were the same as in the a-declension. Of the OE.
nouns which belonged to this type five preserved the
umlaut in the nom. acc. plural in ME., and these cases also
came to be used for the old genitive and dative, as nom. acc.
gen. dat. gēs beside OE. nom. acc. gēs, gen. gōsa, dat.
gōsum; and similarly lous, pl. līs; mous, pl. mīs; brēch
(OE. brēc beside sing. brōc) *trousers*; cou, pl. kī kȳ beside
kȳn kīen with ·n, ·en from the weak declension. In all
the other nouns a new plural in ·es was formed from the
singular after the analogy of nouns like stǫn, pl. stǫnes, as
nom. acc. gen. dat. bǫkes, beside OE. nom. acc. bēc, gen.
bōca, dat. bōcum; and similarly burȝ buruȝ *borough*, pl.
burȝes burwes; furȝ furuȝ *furrow*, pl. furȝes furwes;
gǫtes beside gēt *goats*; nite, pl. nites; niȝt, pl. niȝtes be-
side niȝt *nights*; note, pl. notes *nuts*; ǫk, pl. ǫkes *oaks*;
turf, pl. turves.

c. Neuter.

§ 348. The only noun belonging to this type in OE. was
scrūd *garment*. Already in OE. it had come to be declined
like the long neuter a-stems except that the dat. singular
was scrȳd beside scrūde. In ME. it was declined like an
ordinary old neuter a-stem with dat. in ·(e) and plural in
·es, as schroud, pl. schroudes.

2. Stems in ·þ.

§ 349. Of the four OE. nouns belonging to this type only
two were preserved in ME., viz. mǫneþ (OE. mōnaþ), and
āle *ale* (OE. ealu, gen. and dat. ealoþ). In OE. mōnaþ
was declined like a masc. a-stem except that the nom. acc.

plural was mōnaþ. In ME. a new plural in ·es was formed after the analogy of nouns like stǫnes, as mǫn(e)þes beside the uninflected form mǫneþ. āle remained uninflected in ME.

3. STEMS IN ·r.

§ 350. To this type belong the nouns of relationship : fader (OE. fæder), brōþer (OE. brōþor), mōder (OE. mōdor), dǫuȝter (OE. dohtor), suster soster (OE. sweostor), sister (ON. syster).

The plural of fæder was inflected like a masculine a-stem. The nom. acc. pl. fæderas regularly becạme fadres fadẹres in ME. and was then used for the gen. and dat. also. In OE. the sing. was fæder in all cases, but the gen. had fæderes beside fæder, and similarly in ME. nom. acc. dat. fader, gen. fader beside fadres.

The uninflected forms brōþer, mǫder, dǫuȝter of the nom. acc. and gen. singular came to be used for the old umlauted forms brēþer, mēder, dehter of the dat. singular, so that the singular of these nouns generally remained uninflected in ME., but sometimes, however, a gen. brōþẹres, mǫdres, dǫuȝtres is also found.

The OE. nom. acc. pl. mōdor, dohtor regularly became mǫder, dǫuȝter in ME., and were then used for the old gen. and dative, but beside these forms there also occur plurals in ·es after the analogy of fadres, &c., and in ·en after the analogy of the weak declension, as mǫdres, mǫdren; dǫuȝtres, dǫuȝtren. brōþer also has three plural forms all of which are new formations, viz. brēþer formed after the analogy of words like tōþ, pl. tēþ; brōþẹres formed after the analogy of words like fader, pl. fadres; and brēþẹren formed from brēþer with ·en from the weak declension.

suster soster (OE. sweostor), sister (ON. syster) remained uninflected in the singular just as in OE. This word like mǫder has also three plural forms in ME., viz.

suster, soster, sister, and the plural forms in ·en, ·es, as sustren, sustres.

4. MASCULINE STEMS IN ·nd.

§ 351. OE. had several nouns of this type of which only two were preserved in ME., viz. frẹnd *friend* (OE. frēond) and fẹnd *enemy, fiend* (OE. fēond), see § 73. In OE. the dat. sing. and nom. acc. pl. had umlauted beside unumlauted forms, as dat. sing. friend beside frēonde, pl. friend beside frēondas, otherwise the nouns of this type were inflected like masculine a·stems. In ME. the umlauted form of the dat. singulai disappeared, so that the singular was inflected just like an old masculine a·stem. In early ME. the umlauted plural form frẹnd (OE. friend) was preserved, and then later the ·es plural frẹndes (OE. frēondas) became generalized for all cases, and similarly with fẹnd.

5. NEUTER STEMS IN ·os, ·es.

§ 352. This declension originally contained a large number of nouns, all of which, with the exception of six, passed over into other declensions in the prehistoric period of the language. The six nouns which remained are: cealf *calf*, cild *child*, ǣg *egg*, lamb *lamb*, speld *splinter*, and the pl. brēadru *crumbs*, the last two of which disappeared in ME.

The singular of cealf, cild, ǣg, and lamb was inflected in OE. like an a·stem, and similarly also in ME. In OE. the plural of these nouns was cealfru, ǣgru, lambru, and cild beside cildru. The ending ·ru regularly became ·re in ME., to which was added ·n in the southern dialects after the analogy of the weak declension, as calvren, eiren, lombren, children beside childer. In the northern dialects we also have children beside childer, but in the other words a new plural in ·es was formed direct from the singular, as calves, lambes, egges from ON. egg, and then the ·es plural gradually spread to all the dialects.

CHAPTER VIII

ADJECTIVES

1. THE DECLENSION OF ADJECTIVES

a. THE STRONG DECLENSION.

§ 353. In OE. the strong declension is divided into pure
a-, ō-stems, ja-, jō-stems, and wā-, wō-stems like the corre-
sponding nouns. The original i- and u-stems passed over
almost entirely into this declension in prehistoric OE. In
OE. the declension of the ja-, jō-stems and wa-, wō-stems
only differed from that of the pure a-, ō-stems in the masc.
and fem. nom. singular and the neuter nom. acc. singular,
and even here the ja-, jō-stems with an original short stem-
syllable and the wa-, wō-stems with a long stem-syllable
were declined like pure a-, ō-stems, see *EOE. Gr.* §§ 270, 279,
284. The ending of the nom. singular of the various types
was accordingly in OE. :—

	Masc.	*Neut.*	*Fem.*
Pure a-, ō-stems or stems declined like them	—	—	—, ·u (·o)
ja-, jō-stems or stems declined like them	·e	·e	·u (·o)
Short wa-, wō-stems	·u (·o)	·u (·o)	·u (·o)

After the ending ·u (·o) had been weakened to ·e (§ 134 (*a*)),
the masc. neut. and fem. singular of the adjectives of these
types ended in a consonant or in e-, as short a-, ō-stems :
glad (OE. masc. and neut. glæd, fem. gladu, ·o), and
similarly blak, smal, &c. ; long a-, ō-stems and long wa-,
wō-stems : brọd *broad* (OE. masc. neut. and fem. brād), and
similarly cọld, dẹd *dead*, dẹf *deaf*, hard, lang (long), rẹd
red, riȝt, wīs ; slọw (OE. slāw with ·w from the inflected
forms) ; pl. fẹwe (OE. fēawe *few*) ; ja-, jō-stems : clẹne

(OE. masc. and neut. clǣne, fem. clǣnu, ·o), and similarly
blīþe, grēne, kēne, newe, rīpe, þinne, &c.; frē (OE. frēo
free); short wa·, wō·stems: narwe (OE. masc. neut. and
fem. nearu, gen. masc. and neut. nearwes) with w from
the old inflected forms, and similarly falewe (fāle) *fallow*,
ȝelwe (ȝelowe) *yellow*, &c.

A certain number of OE. adjectives with a short stem·
syllable came to end in ·e in ME. through the levelling out
of the inflected forms, as bāre beside bar (OE. bær, gen.
bares), and similarly lāte, smāle beside lat, smal, see
§ 103. And as OE. final ·ig was weakened to ·i in ME. all
the adjectives of this type also ended in a vowel in ME., as
hevi (OE. hefig), and similarly blǫdi, hǫli, &c., see § 138.

§ 354. The OE. endings of the oblique cases were :—

		Masc.	*Neut.*	*Fem.*
Sing.	Acc.	·ne	= Nom.	·e
	Gen.	·es	·es	·re
	Dat.	·um	·um	·re
Plural Nom.	Acc.	·e	—, ·u (·o)	·a, ·e
	Gen.	·ra	·ra	·ra
	Dat.	·um	·um	·um

In late OE. and early ME. the endings ·um (see § 259),
·u (·o), ·a, and ·ra were regularly weakened to ·en, ·e, ·re
(§ 134). A few of the old case-endings are occasionally found
in early ME., viz. the ending of the acc. masc. singular ·ne,
the gen. and dat. fem. singular ·e (·ere), and a few isolated
forms of the gen. plural were still preserved in Chaucer, as
oure aller cok, alderbest, alderwerst, alderfirst, see
§148. Apart from these isolated forms of the gen. plural,
the form of the masc. nom. singular had become generalized
for the whole of the singular, and the form of the nom. acc.
plural had become generalized for the whole of the plural
before the end of the first half of the thirteenth century.
We accordingly arrive at the following scheme for the

inflexion of strong adjectives in what might be termed standard ME. :—

(*a*) Monosyllabic adjectives ending in a consonant remained uninflected throughout the singular, and had ·e throughout the plural, as brǫd, gǫd, glad, pl. brǫde, gǫde, glade.

(*b*) Adjectives which ended in a vowel in OE. or which came to end in a vowel in ME. (§ 140) remained uninflected throughout the singular and plural.

(*c*) Dissyllabic adjectives including past participles ending in a consonant remained uninflected throughout the singular and plural through loss of the old final ·e in the plural, as bitter, litel, bounden, cursed, &c., see § 142.

The Anglo-Norman adjectives were generally inflected like the native English adjectives.

b. THE WEAK DECLENSION.

§ 355. In OE. the weak declension of adjectives had the same case-endings as the weak declension of nouns except that the gen. plural had the strong ending ·ra beside the weak ending ·ena. The nom. singular of the masculine ended in ·a, and that of the feminine and neuter in ·e, as gōda, gōde; clǣna, clǣne; nearwa, nearwe. Through the weakening of the final ·a to ·e the nom. singular came to be alike for all genders in ME.

§ 356. The endings of the oblique cases were :—

		Masc.	*Neut.*	*Fem.*
Sing.	Acc.	·an	·e	·an
	Gen.	·an	·an	·an
	Dat.	·an	·an	·an
Plural Nom.	Acc.	·an	·an	·an
	Gen.	·ena	·ena	·ena
	Dat.	·um	·um	·um

In late OE. and early ME. the endings ·an, ·ena, um (see § 259) were regularly weakened to ·en, ·ene, and even these

two endings had ceased to be in use after about the beginning of the thirteenth century. In ordinary standard ME. the only distinction preserved between the old strong and weak declensions of adjectives is in the singular of monosyllabic adjectives ending in a consonant, as strong sing. gōd, pl. gōde ; weak sing. gōde, pl. gōde. In all the other types of adjectives there was no longer any distinction between the strong and weak declensions.

2. THE COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES

§ 357. In OE. the comparative and superlative belonged to the weak declension except that the neuter nom. acc. singular had the strong beside the weak form in the superlative, but in ME. they ceased to be inflected at an early period, cp. § 154. In OE. the comparative had or had not umlaut in the stem-syllable according as the ending ·ra corresponded to Germanic ·izō̆ or ·ōzō̆, and similarly in the superlative ·est = Germanic ·ist· beside ·ost = Germanic ·ōst·, see *EOE. Gr.* § 291, as

eald *old*	ieldra	ieldest
geong *young*	giengra ⎰ gingra	giengest ⎰ gingest
grēat *great*	grīetra	grīetest
lang *long*	lengra	lengest
but earm *poor*	earmra	earmost
glæd *glad*	glædra	gladost
lēof *dear*	lēofra	lēofost

The ·ra and ·ost regularly became ·re (·ere) and ·est in late OE. and early ME. (§§ 148, 149), so that in ME. the comparative was generally formed by means of ·re (·ere), later ·(e)r, and the superlative by ·(e)st, as

hard	harder	hardest
fair	fairer	fairest
clēne	clēner	clēnest

§ 358. Only a small number of OE. adjectives had um-laut in the comparative and superlative, and even some of these did not have it in ME. The most important ME. examples are :—

gr$\bar{e}$t	gretter (OE. gr$\bar{i}$etra)	grettest
lang (long)	lenger	lengest beside longest
nei$\mathsf{3}$, ni$\mathsf{3}$ *near*	n$\bar{e}$re (OE. n$\bar{e}$ahra) \ nerre (OE. n$\bar{e}$arra) /	next (OE. n$\bar{i}$ehst) n$\breve{e}$st (Angl. n$\bar{e}$st)
$\bar{o}$ld	elder	eldest
strang (strong)	strenger	strengest

NOTE.—The usual ME. comparative and superlative of $\mathsf{3}$ung *young* were $\mathsf{3}$ungre, -er, $\mathsf{3}$ungest formed direct from the positive, but beside these there were also the regular forms $\mathsf{3}$ingre (OE. gingra), $\mathsf{3}$ingest (OE. gingest) from which a new positive $\mathsf{3}$ing was formed, and which was common throughout the ME. period.

§ 359. Long vowels were regularly shortened in the comparative (§ 90), and then the short vowel was often extended to the superlative, and sometimes even to the positive, as

gr$\bar{e}$t	gretter	grettest
h$\bar{o}$t	hotter	hottest
l$\bar{a}$te	latter	last
st$\bar{i}$f	stiffer	stiffest

In later ME. the comparative and superlative were generally formed direct from the positive, as gr$\bar{e}$ter, gr$\bar{e}$test beside older gretter, grettest; and similarly $\bar{o}$lder, $\bar{o}$ldest beside elder, eldest; l$\bar{a}$ter, l$\bar{a}$test beside latter, last (§ 249); &c.

§ 360. Anglo-Norman monosyllabic and dissyllabic adjectives also formed their comparative in -er and superlative in -est, but adjectives of more than two syllables generally formed their comparative and superlative by prefixing m$\bar{o}$re, m$\bar{o}$st to the positive.

§ 361. A certain number of adjectives in ME. as in OE. and NE. form their comparatives and superlatives from a different root than the positive :—

gōd	better	best (§ 249)
ēvel, ill, badde	werse, wurse	werst, wurst (§ 123)
muche(l), mikel	mǫre (māre)	mēst (mǫst, māst)
litel, līte	lasse, lesse	lēst(e)

§ 362. In a certain number of OE. words the comparative was originally formed from an adverb or a preposition, with a superlative in ·um·, ·uma. The simple superlative suffix was preserved in OE. forma = Goth. fruma, ME. þe forme *the first*, from which was formed in ME. the new comparative former. In prehistoric OE., as in Gothic, to ·um· was added the ordinary superlative suffix ·ist· which gave rise to the double superlative suffix ·umist·, as Goth. frumists *first*, **hindumists** *hindmost*. In OE. ·umist· regularly became ·ymist·, later ·imest·, ·emest·, ·mest·, as inne *within*, innera, innemest. In ME. the ending ·mest came to be associated with mēst, later mǫst (māst) with ǫ (ā) from the old comparative, whence such ME. forms as formēst, formǫst, formāst, beside formest, and similarly inmǫst (innermǫst), souþmǫst, ütmǫst (uttermǫst), &c.

3. NUMERALS

a. CARDINAL NUMERALS.

§ 363. Apart from the regular phonological changes the cardinal numerals also underwent other changes in passing from OE. to ME. The following are the most important changes to be noted :—

ǫn (northern ān), but ǫ (northern ā) before words beginning with a consonant, was used as a numeral ; and the early shortened form an (§ 101), but a before words beginning with a consonant, was used as the indefinite article (§ 247).

twǫ, twō, tǫ (northern **tuā**) = OE. fem. and neut. **twā**, came to be used also for the masculine; and similarly **twein(e), tweie** (= OE. masc. **twēgen**) came to be used also for the feminine and neuter.

þrē = OE. fem. and neut. **þrīo, þrēo,** came to be used also for the masculine.

In OE. the cardinals 4 to 19 generally remained uninflected when they stood before a noun, whereas, if they stood after a noun or were used as nouns, they were inflected as follows: nom. acc. masc. and fem. ·e, neut. ·u (·o), gen. ·a, dat. ·um. The inflexional ending ·e was also preserved in ME., especially when the numerals stood after the noun or were used alone, whence the ME. double forms **fīve, sevene,** &c., beside **fīf, seven,** &c.

The regular OE. forms used for expressing the decades 70 to 120, as **hundseofontig, hundeahtatig, hundnigontig, hundtēontig, hundendleofantig, hundtwelftig** were supplanted by the new formations **seventi,** &c., **hundred and ten, hundred and twenti.** The form **hund,** which along with the units was used to express the hundreds 200 to 900, was gradually supplanted by **hundred.** In OE. the decades, **hundred (hund),** and **þūsend** were nouns and governed the genitive case. In ME. they were almost exclusively used as adjectives.

§ 364. The ME. cardinals are: **ǫn, ǫ** (northern **ān, ā**), **twǫ, twō, tǫ** (northern **tuā**), **tweine, tweie**; **þrē**; **fǫur(e), fǫwre** (cp. § 112 note 2); **fīf, fīve**; **six(e), sex(e)** (Angl. **sex**); **seven(e)**; **eiȝte, auȝte** (northern **aȝt(e)**), see §§ 107, 4, 110, 5; **niȝen(e), nīne**; **tēne** beside the shortened form **ten** (§ 92); **ellevẹn(e), elevẹn(e), enleven** (cp. § 243); **twelf, twelve**; **þrettēne, þrittēne**; **fǫurtēne**; **fiftēne**; **sixtēne**; **seven·tēne; eiȝtetēne; niȝentēne, nīnetēne; twenti, þretti (þritti), fǫurti, fifti, sixti, seventi, eiȝteti (eiȝti), niȝenti (nīn(e)ti), hundred** beside **hundreþ** (ON. **hundraþ**), **þousend.**

b. ORDINAL NUMERALS.

§ 365. In passing from OE. to ME. some of the ordinals underwent analogical changes besides the regular phonological changes. From about the end of the thirteenth century onwards the French form secounde was used beside the English form ōþer. Several of the ordinals were new formations formed direct from the corresponding ME. cardinals, as sevenþe, nīnþe, tēnþe, þrettēnþe (þrittēnþe), &c., beside the regular forms seveþe (OE. seofoþa), niʒeþe (OE. nigoþa), tēþe (OE. tēoþa), þrettēþe þrittēþe (OE. þrēo-tēoþa), &c. Besides these new formations there were also others ending in -de which were partly or entirely due to ON. influence, as sevende (O.Nth. seofunda, siofunda, O.Icel. sjaunde), niʒende, nīnde (O.Icel. nīonde), tēnde (O.Icel. tīonde, tiunde), þrettēnde, þrittēnde (O.Icel. þrettānde), &c. hundred and þousend had no ordinal forms in ME. just as in OE.

§ 366. The ME. ordinals are: first, fürst, ferst, verst (OE. fyrest), ōþer (secounde), þridde (þirde), fǫurþe (ferþe, firþe), fifte, sixte, seveþe (sevenþe, sevende), eiʒteþe (eʒtende, northern aʒtand), niʒeþe (niʒende, nīnde, nīnþe), tēþe (tēnþe, tēnde), ellefte (ellevende), twelfte, þrettēþe (þrittēþe, þrettēnþe, þrittēnde), and similarly fǫurtēþe, fiftēþe, sixtēþe, seventēþe, &c., twentiþe, þrittiþe, &c.

c. OTHER NUMERALS.

§ 367. The ME. multiplicative numeral adjectives were formed from the cardinals and the suffix -fǫld (= OE. -feald), ǫnfǫld beside the loan-word simple, twǭ-, twǭ-fǫld beside the loan-word double, þrēfǫld, &c., fēlefǫld, manifǫld.

§ 368. Adverbial multiplicatives are: ǫnes, ānes, ēnes (OE. gen. ænes), twīes, þrīes. The remaining multiplicatives were expressed by sīþe, tīmes, as fīf sīþe (OE. fīf sīþum), tīmes, &c., fēlesīþe, mani sīþe.

§ 369. For the first, second, third, &c., time, were expressed by sīþe, tīme and the ordinals just as in OE., as þe þridde sīþe (OE. þriddan sīþe).

§ 370. The distributive numerals were expressed by bĭ along with a cardinal, or by two cardinals connected by and, as ǭn and ǭn, þrē̆ and þrē̆; bĭ þrē̆, bĭ twelve, &c.

CHAPTER IX

PRONOUNS

1. PERSONAL

§ 371. The old accusative forms meċ, þec, ūsic and ēowic of the first and second persons singular and plural had been supplanted by the old dative forms mē̆, þē̆, ūs, ēow already in late OE., so that the old datives were used to express both cases in ME. also. And in ME. the old accusative forms of the masculine and feminine and the old accusative plural forms of the third person were also supplanted by the old dative forms. The old genitives (OE. mīn, þīn, pl. ūre, ēower; his, hiere (hire), pl. hiera, hira, heora) lost their genitival meaning in fairly early ME. except in isolated phrases like ūre nǭn *nonc of us*, ūre aller *of all of us*. The old genitival meaning came to be expressed by the preposition of and the dative of the personal pronouns. The old dual forms nom. wit, ȝit; acc. dat. unc, inc; gen. uncer, incer occur in Laȝamon, *Ormulum, Genesis and Exodus, Havelok*, and *The Owl and the Nightingale*, but gradually disappeared in the latter half of the thirteenth century.

a. The First and Second Persons.

§ 372. Singular: Nom. accented form : northern ik, ic, Midland and southern ich (§ 285), but also ic until the beginning of the thirteenth century. The unaccented form

i began to be used in the northern and Midland dialects from the twelfth century onwards. At this early period i only occurred when the next word began with a consonant, but the i gradually came to be used also when the next word began with a vowel, and by about 1400 it had become the only form used in these dialects. Chaucer generally has i both for the accented and unaccented form. He rarely used ich. From i was formed at a later period a new accented form ī (= NE. ai), but the old unaccented form i has been preserved in many modern dialects in interrogative and subordinate sentences. The form ich was in use throughout the ME. period in the southern and south-western dialects. The forms ich (uch, utchy) along with contracted forms ch'am, &c., were formerly used in the modern dialects of Dor., Som., and Dev., and these forms are still used by old people in a small district of Som. close to Yeovil on the borders of Dor. Contracted forms were also common in the Elizabethan dramatists in the speech of rustics, as in *King Lear* chill *I will,* chud *I would.* Accusative and dative mĕ.

Nom. þū (þou) beside the unaccented form þŭ, which became tou (tŭ) when attached enclitically to a verb, as hastou, -tŭ *hast thou,* wiltou, tŭ *wilt thou* (cp. § 243). This form with t- has also been regularly preserved in interrogative and subordinate sentences in many of the modern dialects. Thou in its various dialect forms is still in general use in most of the modern dialects of England, but not in Scotland, to express familiarity or contempt, but it cannot be used to a superior without conveying the idea of impertinence. Accusative and dative þĕ. From the thirteenth century onwards ȝē (yĕ) began to be used for þou as the pronoun of respect in addressing a superior, and in the form ī (generally written ee) it has survived in most of the south Midland and southern dialects down to the present day. During the fourteenth century you also came to be used for both þou

and þē, and then in the fifteenth century ye also came to be used for the acc. þē and you.

Plural : nom. **wĕ**, acc. and dat. **ūs (ous)** beside the un-accented form **ŭs** (= NE. us) ; nom. **ȝĕ** (OE. gĕ), also written ȝee, ye(e), ȝhe, yhe, &c., acc. and dat. ȝọu (ȝọw) **yọu** (for numerous variant spellings see *N. E. D.* s. v.) from OE. **eów** older **éow** (§ 112 note 1).

b. The Third Person.

§ **373.** Masculine Singular : nom. **hĕ** beside the unaccented forms **ha, a,** rarely **e** (still preserved in the modern dialects in the form ə). The dat. **him** had supplanted the old acc. **hin(e)** in the northern and Midland dialects by about 1150, and in the southern dialects in the early part of the fourteenth century. But in the south Midland and southern dialects it must have remained in colloquial use throughout the ME. period, as is evidenced by the modern dialects of this area. **en, un** (= ən), the unaccented form of OE. hine, is still in general use in the modern dialects of the south Midland, southern, and south-western counties as the unaccented form of 'im. It is also used of inanimate objects and in West Som. of feminine animals though never of women. Dative **him**.

§ **374.** The Neuter Singular : Nom. Acc. **hit** (OE. hit) beside the unaccented form **it** (§ 301). **it** began to appear so early as the twelfth century, and in the fifteenth century supplanted the old accented form in the standard language. **hit** is still used in the modern dialects of Scotland and Northumberland. Dative **him,** which was never used for the accusative.

§ **375.** The Feminine Singular : The nom. had several forms in ME. which arose partly from OE. **hīo (hēo),** Anglian **hīe** *she,* and partly from the OE. feminine demonstrative **sīo (sēo),** Anglian **sīe** *the, that.*

Although not expressed in writing, late OE. must have had double forms of hīo (hēo), hīe according as the stress remained on the first element of the diphthongs or was shifted on to the second element, as hío (héo), híe beside hjó (hjó), hjé. In late OE. hío only occurred in Kentish, where it also became a rising diphthong in early ME. (§ 67). The héo regularly became hẹ̄ in late OE. or early ME. (§ 65), and also in early ME. the forms hjó, hjé became differentiated into hǭ, ȝhǭ (also written ȝo, ȝeo, hyo, &c.) and hẹ̄, ȝhẹ̄ (also written ȝe, ge, ghe, hye, &c.) according as the j element entirely disappeared or united with the aspirate h to form a kind of spirant. So that apart from the sh-forms which will be dealt with below early ME. had the four forms hẹ̄, hǭ, ȝhẹ̄, ȝhǭ (cp. § 65 note). hẹ̄ (Ken. hĭ, § 67) beside the unaccented form ha occurs in the south Midland (but see below) and southern dialects, especially the south-western, until the middle of the fifteenth century, and was then gradually supplanted by schẹ̄ in literary records. The change in these dialects was probably due to the fact that the masculine and feminine had regularly fallen together in hẹ̄. But it must have remained in colloquial use, because in many of the dialects of the eastern, southern, and south-western counties ĭ (generally written he) is still used of feminine objects. hǭ beside the unaccented forms ha, a occurs throughout the ME. period in the west Midland dialects and also in parts of the south-western area, as is evidenced by the modern dialects which regularly have ŭ (generally written hoo) in the west Midland area. In the west Midland dialect of the fourteenth century there also occurs the form hue which is a direct descendant of OE. hēo, see § 65. The ME. forms ȝhẹ̄, ȝhǭ (Orm ȝhǭ) occur so far north as the east Midland dialect, but not in the northern dialects.

The late OE. simple demonstrative sīo (sēo), Anglian sīe must have had the double forms séo, síe beside sjó, sjé just like the above héo, híe beside hjó, hjé. The sjé,

sjǒ then regularly became in early ME. schę̄ (also written sge, shee, sse, se, &c.) and schǭ (also written sco, sso, &c.). The type schę̄ was of east Midland origin, and the earliest record of it occurs in the form scæ in the *OE. Chronicle* (Laud MS.) of about the middle of the twelfth century. It is not recorded elsewhere until about a hundred years later when we find it written sge, sche, she in *Gen. & Ex.* From about 1250 it had become fully established in the east Midland dialects. From here it first spread to the south Midland dialects where it had become the general form by the middle of the fourteenth century, and by that time it had also begun to spread to the west Midland dialects, but it never became the colloquial form in the southern dialects during the ME. period. The type schǭ was of north Midland and northern origin, and is first found in literary records towards the end of the thirteenth century. The regular descendant of schǭ is still preserved in the form shŭ, unaccented shə, in many of the northern and north Midland dialects from Cum. to Der.

The OE. acc. hīe began to be supplanted by the dat. hiere, hire so early as the tenth century, and by the time of the early ME. period the hīe had been supplanted by hire, hir ; here, her in all the dialects except Kentish where it lingered on into the early part of the fourteenth century.

§ 376. The Plural: In early ME. the OE. acc. hīe, hī was supplanted by the dative hem beside the unaccented forms ham, hom (= OE. him, hiom, heom) in the northern and Midland dialects, but the old form hĭ lingered on in the southern and south-eastern dialects until about the middle of the fourteenth century. From this hĭ was formed in the late twelfth century a new acc. plural (also used as acc. fem. singular) hise (his, hes) beside the unaccented forms is (es) which were often attached enclitically to a preceding word. These forms remained in these dialects until about the end of the fourteenth century, and then became obsolete.

The ordinary ME. plural forms are partly of native and partly of Scandinavian origin. In the east Midland dialects the native nom. pl. hĭ, he had begun to be supplanted by the Scandinavian form þei (ON. þeir) in the twelfth century, and þei (written þeȝȝ) is the only form found in the *Ormulum* (1200). By the early part of the fourteenth century it had become general in this dialect. It had also become general in the south Midland dialects before the middle of the fourteenth century, in the west Midland dialects by the second half of the fourteenth century, and in the southern dialects, including Kentish, during the fifteenth century. In the northern dialects þai (þei) is the only form even in the oldest ME. records. The substitution of the Scandinavian dat. form þeim for the early ME. native form hem did not take place concurrently with that of þei for hĭ in the various dialects. Orm has dat. and acc. þeȝȝm beside hemm, but in the other east Midland texts þeim does not occur until the fifteenth century. It had become general in the Midland and southern dialects from about 1500. In the northern dialects þaim (þam) was general in the oldest ME. records. In all the modern dialects the accented form is ðem, but in the dialects of England the unaccented form is əm (= OE. heom), and similarly in colloquial standard NE.

2. REFLEXIVE

§ 377. When the personal pronouns were used reflexively in OE. the word self (declined strong and weak) was often added to emphasize them, as ic self beside ic selfa, acc. mec selfne, gen. mīn selfes, dat. mē selfum; or with the dative of the personal pronoun prefixed to the nominative self, as ic mē self, pl. wē ūs selfe, and similarly in early ME. From the early part of the thirteenth century new forms began to appear. In the first and second persons singular the form self came to be regarded as a noun and then the possessive pronoun was substituted for the dative of the

personal pronoun, as mī self, þī self beside older mĕ self, þĕ self, and then in the early part of the fourteenth century this new formation was extended to the plural also, as our(e) self(e), selve(n), ʒour(e) self(e), selve(n) beside older wĕ ūs selve(n), ʒĕ ʒou selve(n). And then towards the end of the fifteenth century the present s-plurals ourselves, yourselves came into existence and eventually became the standard forms. This change in the formation of the reflexive pronouns did not take place in the third person so early as in the first and second persons. his selve(n), þeir(e) selve(n), þair(e) selve(n) beside hem selve(n), þem selve(n) did not begin to appear until the first half of the fourteenth century. All these new formations of the third person disappeared in the standard language about the end of the fifteenth century, but have remained in the dialects down to the present day. The s-plural themselves came into existence about 1500 and during the first half of the sixteenth century became the standard form. From the form alone it cannot be determined whether the hire in ME. hire self and the her in NE. herself represent the old dat. acc. or the old possessive.

In ME. as in OE. the reflexive pronouns were often also expressed simply by the acc. dat. forms of the personal pronouns as is very often the case in the modern dialects, as *And for bonnie Annie Laurie I'd lay me down and dee.*

3. POSSESSIVE

§ 378. The OE. possessive pronouns mīn, þīn, sīn *his, her, its* were declined in the singular and plural, all genders, like an ordinary strong adjective. Instead of sīn, which was mostly used in poetry, the genitive of the personal pronouns was generally used (masc. and neut. his, fem. hiere, hire). sīn did not survive in ME. The other possessive pronouns were expressed by the genitive of the personal pronouns, as ūre beside ūser which did not survive in ME. ; ēower ;

hiera, hira, hiora, heora. OE. ūre was declined like an ordinary strong adjective, see *EOE. Gr.* § 308. The old dual forms uncer, incer disappeared in the thirteenth century.

§ 379. In ME. we have to distinguish between the conjunctive and disjunctive use of the possessive pronouns :—

a. CONJUNCTIVE.

The conjunctive forms were : singular mīn, þīn before a following word beginning with a vowel, and mī, þī when the next word began with a consonant (cp. § 247). The plural forms were mīne, þīne. From mī, þī were formed in the southern dialects of the twelfth century the fem. dat. sing. mīre, þīre after the analogy of forms like hire, ūre (oure), and similarly the fem. dat. form ǫre from ǫ *one*. his with a plural form hise. Beside his the form hit was used in the west Midland dialects of the fourteenth century, and similarly it in the Elizabethan dramatists, and in the modern northern and most of the Midland dialects, where in standard NE. we use its. The old neut. possessive his has been preserved in the modern Hampshire dialects. hir(e), her(e) *her*, our(e), ȝour(e). To express their the northern dialects had þair(e) (ON. þeir(r)a) in the earliest ME. records, also written þaier, þeir beside the unaccented forms þer(e), þar(e), and þeȝȝre beside heore also occurs in the *Ormulum* of the east Midland dialect. The usual forms in the Midland and southern dialects were her(e), hir(e) with their variants hor(e), har(e), hur(e), &c. By the latter half of the fifteenth century þeir (þair) had spread to all the dialects.

b. DISJUNCTIVE.

In OE. and early ME. the disjunctive and the conjunctive possessive pronouns were alike in form. The differentiation in form first began to appear in the northern dialects towards the end of the thirteenth century, and had gradually spread to all the other dialects by about 1500, although in some

southern writers the old forms are found until well on into the seventeenth century.

The disjunctive forms were mīn, þīn, pl. mīne, þīne ; his. The possessive pronouns ending in ·r(e) took a new genitive ending ·es, as hires heres *hers*, ūres oures, ȝoures, heres (þaires, þeires) *theirs*. These new formations began to appear in the northern dialects towards the end of the thirteenth century, whence they gradually spread to the Midland dialects in the latter part of the fourteenth century. In the southern dialects the usual forms throughout the ME. period were : hir(e) her(e) *hers*, our(e), ȝour(e), her(e) *theirs*. Besides the above forms the southern and Midland dialects had forms ending in ·n which began to be formed after the analogy of mīn, þīn from about the middle of the fourteenth century, as hisen (hisn, hizzen, hysene), hiren (hern, huron) *hers*, ouren (ourn), ȝouren (ȝourn), hiren (heren, hern) *theirs*, and in the Midland, eastern, southern, and south-western dialects all the disjunctive pronouns including theirn end in ·n right down to the present day.

4. DEMONSTRATIVE

§ 380. The OE. demonstrative sĕ, þæt, sīo (sēo) was used to express the definite article *the* and the demonstrative *that*, and was declined as follows : —

Sing.	*Masc.*	*Neut.*	*Fem.*
Nom.	sĕ	þæt	sīo, sēo
Acc.	þone	þæt	þā
Gen.	þæs	þæs	þære
Dat.	þæm, þām	þæm, þām	þære
Instr.		þȳ, þon	

Plur. all Genders.

Nom. Acc.	þā
Gen.	þāra, þæra
Dat.	þæm, þām

The late OE. weakened inflected forms were for the most part preserved in early ME. The inflected forms of the singular began to be lost from about the middle of the twelfth century. · This loss of inflexion began much earlier in the northern and Midland than in the southern and Kentish dialects. In fact it was only in these latter dialects that the inflected forms were preserved for any length of time in ME. The s-form of the nom. masc. and fem. singular had begun to take þ· from the oblique forms in late OE., and by about the middle of the thirteenth century it had disappeared in all the dialects except Kentish where the masc. **ze**, and fem. **zy** remained until about a century later. In the northern and east Midland dialects the uninflected nom. masc. and fem. form þĕ had come to be simply *the* by about 1150, and almost everywhere else by about 1300. The neuter **þat** (south-eastern dialects **þet**) remained with the meaning *the* for some time longer before words beginning with a vowel, but by about 1200 (e. g. in the *Ormulum*) it had begun to be used more definitely with the meaning *that* as opposed to *this* than with the meaning *the*. Inflected forms of some of the oblique cases lingered on in the southern dialects until about 1400.

§ 381. The early ME. inflected forms were:—

Singular: Besides þĕ the masc. nom. sĕ (Ken. zĕ) also occurs, and the fem. nom. **se, si, syo** (Ken. **zy**) beside þēo, and the old acc. þǭ, **þa, þæ** used for the nom. in the thirteenth century. Accusative masc. þan(e), þon(e), þen(e); fem. þǭ, þa beside the old nom. þeo, þīe. Genitive masc. and neut. þæs, þas, þes (Orm þess), þeos (Laȝamon, 1205); fem. þer(e), þar(e); Dative masc. and neut. þæn, þen, þon, þan, Ken. also þo in the first half of the fourteenth century; fem. þer(e), þar(e), Laȝamon also þære. But beside these inflected forms the uninflected form þē had come to be used in early ME. as the definite article for all cases and genders of the singular except in a few isolated phrases like **atte**

nāle (OE. æt þǣm ealoþ), for þe nǫnes = for þen ǫnes
found in Chaucer, &c. þī *therefore, because* = the OE. in-
strumental neuter þȳ remained in use until about the middle
of the thirteenth century, also in the compound forþī *because,
for this reason, therefore* until the end of the fourteenth
century, and in the weakened form þe before comparatives
until the present day. þon = OE. þon in the compound
forþon *therefore* remained until the middle of the fifteenth
century, and in the northern dialects until the end of the
eighteenth century.

þat (þet) remained longer as the neuter of the definite
article in the southern than in the Midland and northern
dialects. þat for all genders with the plural þā = OE. þā
had come to be used exclusively as a demonstrative in the
Ormulum (1200), and then about 1300 þās = OE. þās, which
was properly the plural of the OE. word for *this*, began to be
used in the northern dialects of England as the plural of þat.
þǫs (§ 51) corresponding to the northern þās did not become
common as the plural of þat in the Midland and southern
dialects until the latter part of the fifteenth century. The
old ending of the OE. neuter form of the definite article
survives in tone = OE. þæt ān, and toðer = OE. þæt ōþer
in all the modern dialects.

Plural: The early ME. inflected forms of the plural
were:—Nom. acc. þā in the northern dialects and þǫ in the
dialects south of the Humber (§ 51). Genitive þar(e), þer(e).
Dative þan, þon, þen. These gen. and dat. forms dis-
appeared in the first half of the thirteenth century. As in
the singular (see above) so also in the plural the uninflected
form þĕ came to be used at an early period as the definite
article for all cases and genders of the plural just as in
Chaucer, &c. And then the northern þă and the Midland
and southern þǫ came to be used only as the plural of the
demonstrative þat just as in Chaucer, &c. The regular
descendants (ðē, ʒeə, iə) of ME. þā *those* have remained in

the dialects of Scotland and in some of the northern counties of England down to the present day. þǭs with the meaning *those* began to be used in the Midland and southern dialects from about 1475, and by about 1550 had completely supplanted the form þǭ. It is a remarkable fact that those is not used in genuine dialect speech in any of the modern dialects. For the various ways in which it is expressed see *ED. Gr.* § 420.

§ 382. The OE. forms for *this*, plural *these* were : masc. þĕs, neut. þis, fem. þīos (þēos), plural þās. This pronoun was declined as follows :—

Sing.	Masc.	Neut.	Fem.
Nom.	þĕs	þis	þīos, þēos
Acc.	þisne	þis	þās
Gen.	þis(s)es	þis(s)es	þisse
Dat.	þis(s)um	þis(s)um	þisse
Instr.		þȳs, þīs	

PLUR. ALL GENDERS.

Nom. Acc.	þās
Gen.	þissa
Dat.	þis(s)um

The medial ·ss· was often simplified to ·s·. In the dat. sing. and pl. Anglian has þios(s)um, þeos(s)um with u-umlaut beside þis(s)um. Fem gen. and dat. sing. þisse from older *þisre, gen. pl. þissa from older *þisra ; in late OE. there also occur þissere, þissera with ·re, ·ra from the simple demonstrative, beside þisre, þisra with syncope of the medial vowel and simplification of the ss, see *EOE. Gr.* § 310.

The late OE. weakened inflected forms were for the most part preserved until about the middle of the twelfth century,

but by the end of the century the neuter nom. acc. sing. þis had come to be used in the east Midland dialect (*Ormulum*) and doubtless also in the north Midland and northern dialects for all cases and genders of the singular, by the fourteenth century it had spread to the south Midland dialects (Chaucer, &c.), and by the fifteenth century to all the dialects.

§ 383. The early ME. inflected forms were :—

Singular: Nom. masc. þḗs beside the new forms þus, þeos; fem. þeos, þies, þyos, þas (Laȝamon), þues (§ 65). Already at this early period the nom. masc. came to be used for the feminine, as þies (§ 9), and the fem. for the masculine, as þeos, þus. The old masc. þēs, and fem. þeos, þues were preserved in the southern dialects until the middle of the fourteenth century. Accusative masc. þisne, þesne, þusne (Laȝamon); fem. þās, þes. Genitive masc. and neut. þisses, þesses, þisis; fem. þisse, þissere. Dative masc. and neut. þissen, þisse, þisen, þise; þisse beside the new form þusse. The instrumental neut. (OE. þ̄ys, þīs *like this, thus*) seems not to have been common in ME. as it only occurs sporadically between 1375 and the end of the sixteenth century, see *N. E. D.*

Plural: Old inflected forms of the gen. and dat. are only found in the southern dialects, and even there the gen. þissere disappeared about the end of the twelfth century, and the dat. þis(s)en, þesse(n) is not found so late as 1340 except in the *Ayenbite*. As we have already seen (§ 381) the old nom. acc. pl. þās, þǭs = OE. þās *these* came to be used at an early period for the plural of þat with the meaning *those*. Before this change in function took place the plural, irrespective of gender, had often come to be expressed by the masc. nom. sing. þḗs and the neut. nom. acc. þis before the end of the twelfth century, and in some of the south-western dialects by þūs or þ̄ǒs (OE. þēos, § 65) in the thirteenth century, but side by side with these singular forms the new

plurals þēse, þise, þūse or þōse were formed by adding ·e
to the singular after the analogy of the adjectival plural in
·e.   It should be noted that the ē in þēs, þēse can represent
both the ē in OE. þēs and þhe OE. ēo in the fem. þēos
(§ 65), so that the forms þēs, þēse may be partly of feminine
origin.   þēs, þēse seem to occur earliest in the Midland
dialects, and then to have spread to the northern dialects,
and by about 1500 to all the dialects.   From the fourteenth
century onwards the northern dialects also had þir (? from
ON. þeir) as well as the variants þire, þeir(e), þair, þier,
þer(e), þar(e), which has remained in the dialects of
Scotland and the northern counties of England down to the
present day.   þis, þise (Orm, &c., þise) were special Midland
forms, and remained in these dialects until about 1500, by
which time they had been supplanted by þēsę (Chaucer has
þisę beside þēsę, generally spelt þes).   þūs or þōs, þūse
or þōse occur in some of the south-western dialects from
the thirteenth until well on into the fifteenth century, and
were then supplanted by þēsę.

Note.—The precise quality of the ē in ME. þēse is uncertain.
The ordinary ME. spelling may represent ē or ę̄.   In the sixteenth
century it was often spelt þeis which points to ę̄, and the pro-
nunciation of the various forms for *these* in many of the modern
dialects also presupposes a late OE. form þǣs which according to
the *N. E. D.* did exist.

§ 384.   Other ME. demonstrative pronouns are :—
In OE. ilca *same* only occurred in combination with the
definite article, as sē̆ ilca, þæt, sēo ilce *the same*, and was
inflected like a weak adjective.   In ME. we have þe ilke,
þat ilke, þis ilke *the same* ; þe ilke was often contracted into
þilke; self, which in OE. and early ME. was inflected
according to the strong or weak declension of adjectives ;
ȝon, pl. ȝone ; ȝond is also used as a demonstrative *that* in
the *Ormulum.*

5. RELATIVE

§ 385. A relative pronoun proper did not exist in the oldest periods of any of the Germanic languages, and for that reason it was expressed in various ways in the separate languages. In OE. it was expressed by the relative particle þe alone or in combination with the personal or the simple demonstrative pronoun, and for the third person also by the simple demonstrative pronoun alone, see *EOE. Gr.* § 312.

þe alone was also used in early ME., especially in the southern dialects, but it had gone out of general use by about 1250, after which date it is only found sporadically. The combination of the simple demonstrative pronoun with þe for expressing the relative pronoun died out about 1100. From the twelfth century onwards the uninflected old demonstrative neuter þat came to be used for the singular and plural of all genders, but for þat the ON. form **at was** used in the northern and some of the north Midland **dialects** in the oldest ME. records, and it is the usual form in **the** dialects of this area down to the present day. In order **to** indicate more clearly the gender and case of the antecedent to the relative it became common in the fourteenth century to add the personal pronoun of the third person to the þat, as þat . . . he (sche) = *who* ; þat . . . it = *which* ; þat . . . his = *whose* ; þat . . . him = *whom*, &c. ; and similarly with which, as which . . . his = *whose*, &c. These and similar constructions continued in general use until the end of the fifteenth century, and then became obsolete in the sixteenth century. which (plural which(e)), referring both to persons and things, and the oblique cases whǫs, whǫm of the interrogative pronoun whǫ whǫ, also came to be used as relatives at an early period. In later ME. the definite article þe was often added in front of which after the analogy of French usage, as þe which = lequel, and similarly

also sometimes with þat. **What,** referring to things and rarely to personal pronouns or sentences, began to be used as a relative in the early part of the thirteenth century.

6. INTERROGATIVE

§ 386. The OE. simple interrogative pronoun had no independent form for the feminine, and was declined in the singular only, as

	Masc. Fem.	*Neut.*
Nom.	hwǎ	hwæt
Acc.	hwone	hwæt
Gen.	hwæs	hwæs
Dat.	hwǣm, hwām	hwǣm, hwām
Instr.		hwȳ, hwī

The old acc. form **hwone** disappeared in early ME., and its place was taken by the dative **whǫm whǭm,** northern **quǎm quhām.** The ME. gen. **whǫs whǭs,** northern **quǎs quhās** with ǫ (ǭ), ā from the nominative and dative. The old instrumental was preserved in **whī whȳ** *why.* **which** (northern **quilk**), OE. **hwelc, hwilc, hwylc;** ME. pl. **whiche, whichę.**

7. INDEFINITE

§ 387. The more important ME. indefinite pronouns are :—auȝt (OE. āwiht) *anything, aught,* nauȝt (OE. nāwiht) *nothing, naught,* auþer (OE. āhwæþer, āwþer) *one of two,* nauþer (OE. nāhwæþer, nāwþer) *neither of two,* ęch, northern **ilk** (OE. ælc) *each,* **eni, ani** (OE. ǣnig) *any,* see § 92, 2, **eiþer,** Orm **eȝȝþerr** (OE. ǣghwæþer) *each of two,* **neiþer** *neither of two,* **man** (pl **men,** unaccented form **me**) *one,* **nǫn,** northern **nǎn** *none,* but **nǫ, nā** when the next word begins with a vowel ; **ǫuȝt** (OE. ōwiht later **ōht, oht**) *anything, aught,* see § 113, 5, **nǫuȝt** (OE. nōwiht) *nothing, naught,* **ǫuþer** (OE. ōhwæþer, ōwþer) *one of two,* **nǫuþer** (OE. nōhwæþer, nōwþer) *neither of two,* **sum som** (pl. **sume some**) *some one,*

swich, siche, suche, northern **swilk suilk** (OE. **swylc**) *such*, beside northern **slik** (ON. **slīkr**) *such*.

CHAPTER X

VERBS

§ 388. In treating the history of the verbs from OE. to the end of the ME. period we shall generally follow the same order as that adopted in the *EOE. Gr.* §§ 316–95.

The ME., like the OE. verb, has the following independent forms : one voice (active), two numbers, three persons, two tenses (present and preterite), two complete moods (indicative and subjunctive), besides an imperative which is only used in the present tense ; one verbal noun (the present infinitive), a present participle with active meaning, and one verbal adjective (the past participle).

§ 389. ME. verbs like the OE. are divided into two great classes :—Strong and Weak. The strong verbs form their preterite and past participle by means of ablaut (*EOE. Gr.* § 103). The weak verbs form their preterite by the addition of a syllable containing a dental (OE. ·de, ·te) and their past participle by means of a dental suffix (OE. ·d, ·t). Besides these two great classes of strong and weak verbs, there are a few others, which will be treated under the general heading of *Minor Groups*.

§ 390. The chief characteristic differences between the OE. and ME. verbal forms are :—(*a*) the weakening of the OE. vowels **a** and **o** to **e** in medial and final syllables, and the gradual loss of many of the old verbal endings ; (*b*) the numerous levellings and analogical formations which took place, especially in the preterite both of strong and weak verbs ; (*c*) many of the OE. strong verbs became weak in ME. either in the preterite or past participle or in both.

ME. VERBAL ENDINGS

a. The Present.

§ 391. The normal ME. endings of the present are:—

Indic.	S. and Ken.	E.M.	W.M.	N.
Sing.	·e, (e)st, ·(e)þ	·e, ·est, ·eþ	·e, ·es(t), ·es	·e, ·es, ·es
Pl.	·eþ	·en	·en (·es)	·es

Subj. Sing. ·e, pl. ·en in all the dialects. OE. sing. ·e, pl. ·en.

Imper. Sing. —, ·e, pl. M. and S. ·eþ, N. ·es.

Pres. Part. M. ·ende (but south-west Midland inde), S. ·inde (later ·inge, ·ing), N. ·and(e), § 138.

Ɪnf. ·en (OE. ·an).

The east Midland dialects often have ·es for ·eþ in the third pers. sing. from the northern dialects, and similarly ·es for ·est, ·eþ in the west Midland dialects. For the northern ending ·is and the west Midland endings ·us, ·ust, ·uþ see § 134. The OE. West Saxon syncopated and contracted forms of the second and third persons singular were generally preserved in the ME. southern dialects, as bintst, bint, rīst, rīst; sitst, sit; stantst, stant, see § 239. The ending ·eþ of the third pers. singular and plural has been preserved in the form ·ð among the older generation of dialect speakers in Somersetshire and Devonshire. The Midland plural ending ·en of the pres. indicative was a new formation from the endings of the present subjunctive and preterite indicative. This plural ending in ·en has been preserved in many of the modern Midland dialects. In the OE. period the Northumbrian dialect had ·es beside ·est in the second pers. singular, ·es beside ·eþ in the third pers. singular, and ·as beside ·aþ in the plural. In early ME. the endings with ·t and ·þ gradually disappeared, and then later ·es was extended to the first pers. singular, so that

eventually the whole of the singular and plural ended in ·es. The northern plural ending ·es spread at an early period to the west Midland dialects bordering on the northern. In the modern Scottish, northern, and most of the north Midland dialects all persons singular and plural take ·s, ·z (or ·əz) when not immediately preceded or followed by their proper pronoun, that is, when the subject is a noun, an interroga· tive or relative pronoun, or when the verb and the subject are separated by a clause. Through the ME. weakening of the OE. endings the present of all classes of weak verbs fell together except in the southern and Kentish dialects which had the endings ·ie in the first pers. singular, ·ieþ in the plural and ·ien in the inf. of the verbs which in OE. belonged to class II, and verbs of the type **werian** *to defend*, belong· ing to class I (*EOE. Gr.* §§ 370, 380). In the modern south·western dialects, especially those of Dor., Som., and Dev., the old ending ·i, generally written y, has been pre· served in intransitive verbs. In the plural of the imperative the west Midland dialects often have ·es from the northern dialects. This also occurs occasionally in the east Midland dialects. From about the end of the thirteenth century the southern dialects have the ending ·inge (·ing) beside ·inde in the present participle, which was due to the influence of the old endings ·inge, ·ing (OE. ·ung, ·ing) of the verbal noun. In Chaucer the present participle regularly ends in ·ing(e). The OE. ending ·anne of the inflected infinitive was only preserved with simplification of ·nn· to ·n· in a few mono· syllabic verbs, as tǭ dǭne : dǫn *to do*, tǭ sẹne : sẹn *to see*. On the loss of final ·n see §§ 147, 247.

b. THE PRETERITE.

§ 392. The normal ME. endings of the preterite are :—

Indic. { Strong verbs sing. —, ·e, —,   pl. ·en
{ Weak   ,,   ,,   ·e, ·est (·es), ·e,   pl. ·en

Subj. strong and weak verbs sing. ·e, pl. ·en. OE. ·e, pl. ·en.

Pp. : strong verbs ·en, weak verbs ·ed (·d), ·t.

The personal endings of the preterite indicative were lost fairly early in the northern dialects, so that the singular and plural had the same form throughout, as spak, māked, &c., whereas the other dialects preserved the old difference between the singular and plural as in Chaucer. In the northern dialects the preterite indicative came to be used at an early period for the subjunctive, as northern band beside Midland and southern bounde, pl. bounden. This change had also taken place in the Midland dialects before Chaucer's time. The past participle was rarely inflected even in early ME. The prefix ȝe·, later i·, y· (§ 240) disappeared early in the northern dialects, and mostly also in the Midland dialects. It remained longest in the southern dialects. It has been preserved in the form ə· in many of the modern south Midland and south-western dialects. For ·ed in the past participle of weak verbs the northern dialects generally had ·id, the Scottish ·it, and the west Midland ·ud (·ut), see §§ 134, 239 ; and similarly in the preterite after the loss of final ·e (§ 141).

§ 393. The final ·n of the infinitive disappeared in the OE. period in Northumbrian, whereas in the pp. of strong verbs it remained throughout the ME. period in the northern dialects. It also disappeared fairly early in the infinitive and pp. of strong verbs in the Midland and southern dialects, and in the indicative present plural of the Midland dialects, as well as in the plural of the present subjunctive, the plural of the preterite indicative and subjunctive of all the dialects, cp. § 247.

A. STRONG VERBS

§ 394. In ME. as in OE. the strong verbs are divided into seven classes. Before giving examples of the various

classes of strong verbs, it will be useful to state here in a connected manner some of the changes which these verbs underwent in general during the ME. period :—

1. In the present of verbs belonging to the third, fourth, and fifth classes the ĕ of the first person singular and of the plural was levelled out into the second and third persons singular, as helpe, helpest, helpeþ = OE. helpe, hilp(e)st, hilp(e)þ; bęre, bęrest, bęreþ = OE. bere, bir(e)st, bir(e)þ; ęte, ętest, ęteþ = OE. ete, it(e)st, iteþ, it(t).

2. The unmutated forms of the first person singular and of the plural of the present were levelled out into the second and third persons singular, except in a few monosyllabic forms of the southern dialects, as falle, fallest, falleþ = OE. fealle, fielst, fielþ, but southern gǭ, gęst, gęþ = OE. gā, gǣst, gǣþ.

3. Verbs which had double consonants in the first person singular and in the plural of the present levelled out the double consonants (except bb, gg) into the second and third persons singular, as falle, fallest, falleþ = OE. fealle, fielst, fielþ; sitte, sittest, sitteþ = OE. sitte, sitst, sit(t).

4. The old form of the second person singular of the preterite was generally preserved in early ME. in the Midland and southern dialects, as bounde, spęke spęke beside band (bond), spak of the first and third persons singular, but in the northern dialects the form of the first and third person singular became generalized for the singular at an early period, and similarly later in the Midland and southern dialects, which at a still later period often added -est from the present of the second person singular. Chaucer has the old beside the new form, as songe (= sunge), bęre bęre beside drank, spak.

5. In the northern dialects the preterite singular had begun to be levelled out into the plural already at the beginning of the fourteenth century, whereas in the Midland and southern dialects the old distinction between the stem·

vowels of the singular and plural forms was generally preserved throughout the ME. period, but even in Chaucer the singular was sometimes levelled out into the plural. On the other hand the form of the plural was sometimes levelled out into the singular in the Midland and southern dialects, as sẹ̄t(e) sẹ̄t(e), pl. sẹ̄ten sẹ̄ten, beside northern **sat**, pl. **sat(e)**.

6. In the second class of strong verbs the preterite plural was generally remodelled on the past participle, as **crǫpen** for older crupen (OE. crupon), pp. crǫpen (OE. cropen) *crept*.

7. In OE. the preterite singular and plural of the seventh class of strong verbs had ē or ēo, but as ēo became ẹ̄ in ME. all the verbs of this class, which remained strong in ME., had ẹ̄ in the preterite, see § 65.

8. In the northern dialects the preterite indicative came to be used at an early period for the preterite subjunctive, which was generally also the case in Chaucer.

9. The final ·n of the past participle remained throughout the ME. period in the northern dialects, whereas in the other dialects it disappeared fairly early, as northern **cumen**, **tāken**, beside **ycome**, **ytāke** in the other dialects.

10. The participial ending ·en became ·n after liquids, and after long vowels and diphthongs, as **stǫln**, **bǫrn**, **swǫrn**; **leyn**, **seyn**, **slayn** (§§ 144, 147).

11. Only a few verbs preserved the operation of Verner's Law (*FOE. Gr.* §§ 115, 116), as **wẹ̄ren wẹ̄ren : was**, for·lǫr(e)n : forlẹ̄sen, sǫden : sẹ̄þen.

12. As early as the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries many of the OE. strong verbs had begun to have weak beside the strong forms, and some verbs had become entirely weak before the end of the ME. period. All the French verbs were weak in ME. except **strīven** (O.Fr. **estriver**). ON. verbs remained strong or weak according as they were strong or weak in ON.

Full Conjugation of a ME. Strong Verb.

§ 395. The early ME. inflexion of bĭnden will serve as a
model for the conjugation of strong verbs generally.

Present.

Indicative.

	S. and Ken.	E.M.	W.M.	N.	OE.
Sing. 1.	bīnde	bīnde	bīnde	binde	binde
2.	bintst	bīndest	bīndes(t)	bindes	bindest, bintst
3.	bint	bīndeþ, ·es	bīndeþ, ·es	bindes	bindeþ, bint
Plur.	bīndeþ	bīnden	bīnden, ·es	bindes	bindaþ

Subjunctive.

Sing. bĭnde }
Plur. bĭnden} in all the dialects, OE. binde, pl. binden.

Imperative.

Sing. bĭnd in all the dialects, OE. bind.

Plur. N. bindes, but bīndeþ in the other dialects, OE.
    bindaþ.

Infinitive.

N. binde, but bīnden in the other dialects, OE. bindan.

Present Participle.

N. bindand, M. bīndende, S. and Ken. bīndinde, OE.
    bindende, cp. § 391.

Preterite.

Indicative.

	S. and Ken.	M.	N.	OE.
Sing. 1.	bond	band (bond)	band	band (bond)
2.	bounde	bounde·	band	bunde
3.	bond	band (bond)	band	band (bond)
Plur.	bounden	bounden	band(en)	bunden

Subjunctive.

	S. and Ken.	M.	N.	OE.
Sing.	bounde	bounde	band	bunde
Plur.	bounden	bounden	band(en)	bunden

Participle.

| ȝebounde(n) | ȝebounde(n) | bunden | (ge)bunden |

THE CLASSIFICATION OF STRONG VERBS.

CLASS I.

§ 396.   OE.   ī   .   ā (§ 51)   i   i
         ME.   ī   ǭ (N. ā)   i   i
               bīten   bǫt (N. bāt)   biten   biten
               drīven drǫf (N. drāf) driven   driven

And similarly abīden (bīden), agrīsen *to be horrified*, arīsen (rīsen), bistrīden, biswīken *to deceive*, clīven *to adhere,* flīten *to quarrel*, glīden, grīpen *to grip, seize*, rīden, rīnen *to touch*, rīven (ON. rīfa) *to tear*, schīnen, schrīven, slīden, slīten *to slit*, smīten, strīden, strīken, strīven (O.Fr. estriver), þrīven (ON. þrīfa), wrīten, wrīþen *to twist*. On preterites like bǫte, arǭse (s = z), drǭve beside older bǫt, arǭs, drǭf, cp. §§ 140, 266, 277; and on early shortenings like droff(e, schroff(e see § 100.

§ 397. As early as the fourteenth century many of the verbs in the preceding paragraph had begun to have weak beside the strong forms either in the preterite or past participle or in both, as bīted(e, bīted ; schīned(e, schīned ; and similarly with grīpen, schrīven, strīken, strīven, þrīven ; and with shortening of the stem-vowel, as slitte, y·slit (cp. §§ 87, 93), and similarly with flīten, slīden, slīten, smīten. Some verbs passed over entirely into the weak conjugation, as dwīnen *to disappear*, dwīned(e, dwīned ; spiwen (§ 116), spiwed(e, spiwed ; sīken sīchen (OE. sīcan) *to sigh*, pret. sīȝte, pp. y·sīȝt formed after the analogy

of verbs like sǫuȝte, y·ɛǫuȝt (§ 426) : sēken sēchen *to seek*, from the preterite and pp. was formed the new present sīhen sīȝen sīghen in the fourteenth century ; &c.

§ 398. sīȝen, sīen sȳen = OE. sīgan (§ 122, 2) *to sink, fall* ; pret. sing. sāȝ, sǭȝ, sēȝ, sey (§ 107, 5) beside late ME. weak seit seyt seyit ; pp. y·sigen (seȝen). stīȝen, stīen stȳen = OE. stīgan (§ 122, 2), steien *to ascend* ; pret. sing. stāȝ, stawe (§ 110, 4), stēȝ (steiȝ) beside weak stīde, stīede, stīȝed(e, stēȝed(e, pl. stīȝen, stīen stȳen (§ 122, 1), stǫwen (§ 113, 3) ; pp. stīȝen, stīen stȳen, stǭȝen beside weak stīȝed, steied. wrēn (OE. wrēon) *to cover* ; pret. sing. wrēȝ (wreiȝ), pl. wriȝen, wrīen wrȳen ; pp. wriȝen, wrīen wrȳen. þēn (OE. þēon) *to thrive* ; pret. sing. þēȝ (þeiȝ), pl. þǭȝen (þǫwen) ; pp. þǭȝen (þǫwen). The pret. sing. sēȝ, stēȝ (steiȝ), wrēȝ (wreiȝ) were formed after the analogy of class II (§ 401), and þēn (OE. þēon, þāh, þigon, þigen) went over entirely into this class.

<center>CLASS II.</center>

§ 399.

	OE.	ēo	ēa	u	o
	ME.	ę̄	ę̄	ǭ (u)	ǭ
		flę̄ten *to flow*	flę̄t	flǭten (fluten)	flǭten

In early ME. the pret. plural regularly had u, but later the verbs of this class generally had ǭ from the past participle ; and similarly bręwen (§ 112, 1) *to brew*, chęwen (chǫwen, cp. § 65 note) *to chew*, clęven *to cleave*, crēpen *to creep*, ȝę̄ten *to pour*, ręwen *to rue*. będen *to bid, command*, pret. sing. będ beside bedd with early shortening (cp. § 100), bǫd (see § 394, 5), and bad due to mixing up of bidden (§ 410) with będen, pl. buden, bǫden, bedden (see § 394, 5), pp. bǫden, late ME. bodden with shortening of the stem-vowel. schę̄ten (schüten, schǫten, cp. § 65 and note) beside schott(en with early shortening *to shoot*, pret. sing. schęt, pl. schǫten beside schotten ; pp. schǫten, later schotten,

schot. Many of the above verbs had weak beside the strong forms as early as the fourteenth century, as pret. and pp. bręwed(e, bręud, brued; clęved(e (clefte, cleft with shortening of the stem-vowel, see § 92, 2); and similarľy cręped(e (crepte, crept); flęted(e (flette); ręwed(e; schotte, schott.

§ 400. sęþen *to seethe*, pret. sing. sęþ, pl. sǫden (suden) beside weak sęþed(e, pp. sǫden (sǫþen); chęsen (chūsen, chǫsen *to choose*, cp. § 65 and note), pret. sing. chęs (= OE. céas), chās, chǫs (= OE. ceás), pl. cǫren (curen), chǫsen, chęsen (cp. § 394, 5) beside weak chęsed(e, chūsed(e, pp. cǫren, cŏrn, chǫsen; and similarly fręsen *to freeze*, forlęsen lęsen *to lose* (weak pret. and pp. also leste, lest; loste, lost). For the consonant changes due to Verner's law see *EOE. Gr.* § 116.

§ 401. dręȝen, dreien (drīen drȳen, cp. § 107, 6) *to endure*, pret. sing. dręȝ (dreiȝ § 107, 5), pl. druȝen, dręȝen (dreien) with ę (ei) from the singular (cp. § 394, 5), pp. drǫȝen, drǫwen (cp. § 113, 2); lęȝen, leien (līȝen, līen lȳen) *to tell lies*, pret. sing. lęȝ (leiȝ), pl. luȝen (lowen, ou = ū, see § 122, 5), lǫwen beside weak lęȝed(e, leiȝed(e līȝed(e, lȳed(e, pp. lǫȝen, lǫwen beside weak līȝed, līed; tęn (OE. tēon) *to draw*, pret. tęȝ (teiȝ), pl. tuȝen (towen, cp. § 122, 5), pp. tǫȝen, tǫwen. ME. flęn (OE. flēon) *to flee* and flęȝen (OE. flēogan) *to fly* became mixed up in the present, as flęn (flīen flȳen), pret. sing. flęȝ (fleiȝ), flāȝ(e (flaw(e, pl. fluȝen (flowen), flǫȝen (flǫwen) beside weak flęde, fledde with early shortening (cp. § 100), pp. flǫȝen (flǫwen), flǫwn (flǫun) beside weak fledd; pres. flęȝen (*Ormulum* flęȝhenn), fleien, flīen flȳen, flęn, pret. sing. flęȝ (fleiȝ), flāȝ(e (flaw(e, flǫw(e with ǫw from the plural and pp., pl. fluȝen (flowen, § 122, 5), flǫȝen (flǫwen) beside late weak pret. flȳde, pp. flǫȝen (flǫwen).

§ 402.

	OE.	ū	ēa	u	o
	ME.	ū (ou)	ę̄	ǫ (u)	ǭ

būȝen bouȝen (būen bouen bowen, § 122, 6) *to bow, bend,*
pret. sing. bęȝ (beiȝ), pl. buȝen (buwen, bouen bowen (§ 122,
5), beside weak bouȝed(e, bouwed(e bowed(e, pp. bǫȝen,
bǫwen (§ 113, 2) beside weak bowed ; schūven (schouven,
schove(n)) *to push, shove,* pret. sing. schęf, schǫf (§ 394, 5)
beside weak schoved(e, schufte, pp. schǫven (schuven)
beside weak schowved, schuft ; sūken (souken) *to suck,*
pret. sing. sęk, sǫk (§ 394, 5) beside weak souked(e, pl.
suken, sǫken, pp. sǫken (sŭken) beside weak souked ;
and similarly sūpen (soupen) *to sup* ; unlūken (unlouken)
to unlock.

<div align="center">CLASS III.</div>

§ 403.

OE. i	a (o)	u	u
ME. i	a (o), § 42	u (o = u)	u (o = u), § 9
drinken	drank (dronk)	drunken	drunken
spinnen	span (spon)	spunnen	spunnen

And similarly with other verbs containing a nasal + con-
sonant other than d or b, as schrinken, sinken, stinken,
swinken *to labour, toil*; clingen, dingen (ON. dengja) *to
beat, strike,* flingen (ON. flengja), ringen, singen, slingen
(ON. slöngva), springen, stingen, swingen, þringen *to
throng, press*; bilimpen *to happen,* swimmen; biginnen
(N. pret. also bigouþe, see note) ; blinnen *to cease,* rinnen
(ON. rinna) *to run,* winnen. To this subdivision properly
belong also irnen, ernen, urnen (WS. iernan, Angl. eornan
to run, see *EOE. Gr.* § 340 note), pret. sing. arn(e, orn(e
(OE. arn, orn), pl. and pp. urnen, ornen beside weak pret.
ernde, also arnde (pp. y-arned, arnd) from the OE. weak
causative verb ærnan ; and rennen (ON. renna) *to run,*
pret. sing. ran (ron), pret. pl. and pp. runnen (ronnen)
beside weak pret. rende, renned(e, pp. renned.

Some of the above verbs haď weak beside the strong
forms, especially in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as

sinked, stinked, swinked; dinged, swinged; swimde
(pp. swimmed).

Note.—1. The pret. **bigan (bigon)** was often used as a kind of
auxiliary verb with loss of the prefix and unvoicing of the g- to k-,
whence the common forms con in the west Midland and can in
the northern dialects. And then in Scottish the new **can** became
mixed up with old can (§ 435) and gave rise to the analogical
pret. **kouþ(e)** beside **bigan, bigouþ(e)**, see *N.E.D.* s.v.

2. The ME. for *to burn* comprises forms from four different
types of stem :—(1) **bern-,** the OE. strong intransitive verb WS.
biernan, Angl. **beornan**; (2) **brinn-,** the strong intransitive verb
OE. ***brinnan** (ON. **brinna**); (3) **barn-,** the OE. weak causative
verb **bærnan**; (4) **brenn-,** the ON. strong verb **brenna.** The old
strong forms of the preterite and pp. do not appear later than
Laȝamon (*c.* 1205), and the distinction between transitive and
intransitive was soon lost, the four types being used indiscrimina-
tively in meaning though their usage varied in different dialects,
the **brinn-, brenn-** types belonging chiefly to the areas more
strongly influenced by Scandinavian. In late ME. and onwards
into the sixteenth century the most common type was **brenn-.**
Examples are :—(1) **beornen, birnen, bernen,** pret. sing. **born,** pl.
burnen beside weak **bernde**; (2) **brinnen,** pret. **brinde, brint(e,
brynned(e,** pp. **brind, brint**; (3) **barnen,** pret. **barnde**; (4)
brennen, pret. **brenn(e)de, brende, brent,** pp. **brend, brent.**

§ 404.

ī(i, § 73) a (o)   ū (u, § 73)   ū (u)
bĭnden band (bond) bounden (bunden) bounden (bunden)

And similarly fĭnden, grĭnden, wĭnden; clīmben (§ 72),
pret. sing. clǫmb, clămb (§ 72), pl. cloumben, clumben,
clămben (§ 394, 5) beside weak clīmed(e, pp. cloumben,
clumben (clomben, o = u). For bound(e, found(e beside
band (bond), fand (fond), see § 394, 5.

§ 405.

e   a   o (u)   o
helpen   halp   holpen (hulpen)   holpen

The verbs of this type regularly had u in the preterite

plural in early ME., but later they generally had o from the past participle as in Chaucer. Nearly all of them had begun to have weak beside the strong forms as early as the fourteenth century, and some of them had become entirely weak before the end of the ME. period. And similarly berken, delven, kerven *to carve*, melten, smerten, sterven, swellen, swelten *to die*, werpen *to throw* (cp. § 38), ȝellen, ȝelpen *to boast*; bersten (bresten) *to burst* (cp. § 130), þreschen. Cp. § 129.

§ 406. berȝen, berwen (§ 298) *to protect, preserve*, pret. sing. barȝ, pl. bur(e)ȝen, borȝen (borwen), pp. borȝen (borwen); swelȝen (swelewen, ·owen, ·awen, swoleȝen, swolewen, ·owen) *to swallow*, pret. sing. swal(u)ȝ, swalewe beside weak swel(o)wed(e), swolewed(e), swolȝed, pp. swolȝen (swolwen, swelȝen) beside weak swelewed, ·owed, see *EOE. Gr.* § 102: wurþen, worþen (OE. weorþan, § 38) *to become*, pret. sing. warþ (wurþ, worþ), pl. wurþen, worþen (OE. wurdon), pp. worþen, wurþen (OE. worden), see *EOE. Gr.* § 116; ȝẹlden (southern ȝilden) *to recompense*, pret. sing. ȝọld (N. ȝāld, S. ȝẹld § 71), pl. ȝūlden (ȝọlden), pp. ȝọlden (cp. § 71) beside weak ȝẹlded(e, pp. ȝẹlded; fiȝten (feȝten, feiȝten) *to fight*, pret. sing. fauȝt, faȝt (§ 110, 5), feiȝt (§ 107, 4), pl. fuȝten (fọuȝten), pp. fōȝten, fọuȝten (§ 113, 4); breiden (OE. bregdan, § 107, 1) *to brandish*, pret. sing. braid breid (OE. brægd, § 106) beside weak breide braide, pl. brudden (OE. brūdon), pp. broȝden (OE. brogden), broiden beside weak braided, breided, broided; freinen (OE. fregnan, frignan) *to ask, inquire*, pret. sing. frain frein beside weak frained(e), freined(e).

<div align="center">CLASS IV.</div>

§ 407.

OE.	e	æ	ǣ (ē) § 52	o
ME.	ẹ	a	ẹ (ę̄)	ǫ
	bẹren *to bear*	bar	bẹren (bę̄ren)	bǫren bǫ̈rn

And similarly hęlen *to conceal,* quęlen *to die,* schęren *to shear,* stęlen *to steal,* tęren *to tear.* cumen (comen) *to come,* pret. sing. cǫm (cam, § 55), pl. cǫmen (cāmen), pp. cumen (comen); nimen *to take,* pret. sing. nǫm (nam, § 55), pl. nǫmen (nāmen), pp. numen (nomen), see § 42 note.

<div align="center">CLASS V.</div>

§ 408.

OE.	e	æ	ǣ (ē) § 52	e
ME.	ę̄	a	ę̄ (ę̄)	ę̄
	knęden *to knead*	knad	knęden (knę̄den)	knęden

And similarly męten *to measure,* biquęþen, quęþen; pret. sing. quaþ, quad; quoþ, quod with d from the old pret. plural (Verner's law), and o with early rounding of a to o; quod was the prevailing form from about 1350 to 1550; wę̄ʒen (weien, § 107, 1) *to carry,* pret. sing. wai (wei); was (wes, § 43 note), pl. węren węren (wāren, wǫren, § 166). Some of these verbs had also weak beside the strong forms, as pret. and pp. kned(de, mett(e, wei(e)de (pp. y·wę̄ʒed, weied, § 107, 1).

§ 409. A number of verbs originally belonging to this class went over into class IV, as bręken, brak, bręken (brę̄ken, brāken), brǫken; and similarly drępen *to kill,* spęken, tręden (also weak tred(d)ed(e), węven *to weave,* wręken *to avenge;* also pp. knǫden, quǫþen.

§ 410. ę̄ten *to eat,* pret. sing. ę̆t, ę̄t (OE. æt, ēt) beside the new formation at, pl. ę̄ten, ę̆ten, pp. ę̄ten, late ME. also ětten (ěttyn); and similarly fręten *to devour,* late ME. also weak pret. and pp. fręted. ʒěven, ʒiven beside given (Orm gifenn), N. gif *to give* (§ 176), pret. sing. ʒaf, ʒef, ʒafe, ʒave, ʒof, ʒove beside gaf, gaf(f)e, pl. ʒę̆ven, ʒę̄ven, ʒāven, ʒǭven (cp. § 166) beside gęven (Orm gæfenn), pp. ʒěven, ʒǫven, ʒiven (Orm ʒivenn) beside given (Orm also givenn), see

§§ 176, 202. gēten, giten (ON. geta) *to get*, pret. sing. găt(t, get (§ 29), pl. gēten, gēten (getten, găt(t)e(n)), pp. gēten (getten, git(t)en, gŏt(t)en), see § 176. forȝēten, forȝiten beside forgēten *to forget*, pret. sing. forȝat beside forgăt, pl. forȝēten, forȝēten beside forgēten, pp. forȝēten beside forgēten. bidden (OE. biddan), also bedden (cp. §§ 92, 1, 399) in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries *to pray, beg, bid*, pret. sing. bad (badd, bed(d, badde) beside bēd (OE. bēad, see § 399), pl. bēden, bēden, pp. bēden beside early ME. bidden. sitten *to sit*, pret. sing. sat, also later satte, pl. sēten, sēten, also later sat(t)en, pp. sēten, later ME. also setten, sitten, satt(e. liggen, līen, līn (§§ 122, 1, 296) *to lie down*, pret. sing. lai (Orm laȝȝ), cp. § 106, lei, pl. lēȝen, lēȝen, leiȝen, leien (laien), pp. leien (lein, lain), līen, līn. sēn (Ken. zī, zȳ) *to see*, pret. sing. saȝ, sauȝ saugh (§ 110, 5), saw (§ 110, 4), seȝ, seiȝ seigh, sey (Chaucer say), § 107, 4, siȝ, sī sȳ (§ 107, 6), pl. sawen (§ 110, 4), sāȝen, sauȝen, sọ̄ȝen, sọwen, sēȝen (Orm sæȝhenn), seien, sīen sȳen (§ 107, 6), pp. sēwen (OE. sewen), sawen (OE. sawen, see *EOE. Gr.* § 350), sei(e)n sey(e)n (OE. Anglian gesegen), sēn (OE. adj. gesīene, gesēne *visible*).

CLASS VI.

§ 411.

	OE.			
OE.	a	ō	ọ̄	æ (a)
ME.	ā	ọ̄	ọ̄	ā
	fāren *to travel*	fọ̄r	fọ̄ren	fāren

And similarly āken *to ache*, bāken, forsāken, grāven *to dig* (pret. sing. grọ̄f), lāden *to load*, schāken, schāven, wāden, wāken (N. wak, wakke), tāken (ON. taka), N. tak beside N. and n. Midland tā(n, pret. also tọ̄, pp. tān, see § 250. Several of the above verbs had weak beside the strong forms as early as the fourteenth century, as āked(e, forsāked(e, grāved(e, schāked(e, schāved(e, tāked(e.

§ 412. hĕven (OE. hebban, § 265) *to raise, heave*, pret. sing. hōf, hǫve (cp. §§ 140, 267) beside the analogical forms haf, have, hĕf, hĕve, weak hĕved(e, pl. hǫven, hĕven, pp. hǫven (after the analogy of class IV, § 407), hĕven, weak hĕved. scheppen, schippen (OE. scieppan) beside the new formation schāpen (from the pp.) *to create*, pret. sing. schōp, also schĕp after the analogy of class VII (§ 414) beside weak schapte, schipte, schupte, pl. schōpen, pp. schāpen beside weak schāped. standen (stǫnden), pret. sing. stōd, pl. stōden, pp. standen (stǫnden). steppen, stāpen, stappen *to proceed*, pret. sing. stōp, stĕp after the analogy of class VII (§ 414) beside weak stapped(e, stapte, pl. stōpen, pp. stāpen. swĕren (OE. swerian) *to swear*, pret. sing. swōr beside the analogical forms swar, swĕr, weak swĕred, swāred, pl. swōren, pp. swōren, swōrn after the analogy of class IV (§ 407), weak y-swĕred, y-swāred. waschen (Ken. weschen, wesse(n), § 289) *to wash*, pret. sing. wŏsch (wĕsch) beside weak wasched, wesched, pl. wŏschen (wĕschen), pp. waschen (weschen), beside weak wasched (wesched). waxen *to grow*, pret. sing. wox (cp. § 94), wax after the analogy of class IV (§ 407), wex (OE. wēox), pl. woxen, wexen, pp. waxen, woxen.

§ 413. draȝen, drāȝen, drawen (§ 103, 3), early ME. also dreiȝen, dreien *to draw*, pret. sing. drōȝ, drou̯ȝ, drǫw (§ 114, 2), drew, Sc. drew̯ȝ drewch (§ 115), pl. drōȝen, drǫwen, drewen, pp. drāȝen, drawen, also dreien, dr͡in (drayn). And similarly gnaȝen, gnāȝen, gnawen *to gnaw*. flĕn (OE. flēan) *to flay*, pret. sing. flōȝ (OE. flōg, flōh), flǫu̯ȝ, flǫw, also flew (§ 115), pl. flōȝen, flǫuȝen, flǫwen, flewen, pp. flāȝen, flawen (OE. flagen), flain(e) (OE. flægen, § 106). slĕn (OE. slēan), N. slān, slā (ON. slā, § 166), slǫn(e, beside the analogical forms slāȝe(n), slayn, pret. sing. slōȝ, slǫuȝ, slǫw, slew (§ 115), pl. slōȝen, slǫwen, slewen, pp. slāȝen, slawen (OE. slagen), slain, slein (OE. slægen, slegen, *EOE. Gr.* § 358), slān, slǫn from the present.

laȝen (Orm lahȝhenn), lāȝen, lauȝen, lauȝwen (Anglian hlæhhen, cp. § 110, 5), leȝen, lēȝen, leiȝen, liȝen (WS. hliehhan, cp. § 306) *to laugh*, pret. sing. lōȝ, lǫuȝ, lǫw, N. leuȝ(e, lugh(e, see §§ 114–15, beside weak lāȝed(e,lǻuȝed(e, leiȝed(e, N. lauȝt, luȝt, pl. lōȝen, lǫwen, pp. laȝen, lāȝen, lauȝen.

CLASS VII.

§ 414. To this class belong those verbs which originally had reduplicated preterites. In OE. they are divided into two subdivisions according as the preterite had ē or ēo. But as ēo regularly became ę̄ in ME. (§ 65) all the verbs of this class, which remained strong, have ę̄. The pret. sing. and pl. have the same stem-vowel. The verbs are here arranged according as in OE. the present had: **ā, ǣ, ō, ea, āw, ōw, ē, ēa.**

1. OE. **ā**: hǫten, N. hāten (OE. hātan) *to bid, order, call, name.* In OE. the passive was expressed by **hātte** *is* or *was called*, pl. hātton (*EOE. Gr.* § 316). In ME. the active hǫten, pret. hę̄t (OE. hēt), heȝt, hiȝt (OE. hěht) came to mean both *to call* and *to be called.* From about 1200 the pret. heȝt, hiȝt often took final ·e like the weak verbs. And both hę̄t and hiȝt passed over to the past participle. Further heȝt(e, hiȝt(e came to be used also for the present. From the strong preterite hę̄t a new ME. present hę̄ten with weak preterite hette was formed in the early fourteenth century. Thus the. common ME. forms are: hǫten, hāten, hę̄ten, pret. sing. hę̄t, heȝt(e, hiȝt(e beside weak hette, pp. hǫten (hāten, hatten), hę̄t, hiȝt.

schǫden, schęden Orm shǣdenn (OE. scādan, sceādan) *to separate*, pret. schę̄d beside weak schadde, schedde (cp. § 91), pp. schǫden, schęden beside weak schad(d, sched(d, late ME. also schedded.

2. OE. **ǣ (ē)**: lę̄ten (lēten) *to let*, pret. lę̄t, lett, lat, pp. lę̄ten (lēten), letten, latten. slępen (slēpen) *to sleep*, pret. slę̄p beside weak slę̄ped(e (slēped(e), slepped(e, slepte,

pp. slēpen (slēpen) beside weak slēped (slēped), slapt, slept (cp. § 91).

3. OE. ō : fōn (OE. fōn) beside the new formation fangen (fongen) from the past participle *to seize.* pret. fēng (OE. fēng), also the new formation fong, beside weak fanged(e (fonged(e), pp. fangen (fongen) beside weak fanged (fonged). hōn (OE. hōn) beside the new formation hangen (hongen) from the past participle *to hang,* pret. hēng (OE. hēng), hing (cp. § 99), pp. hangen (hongen).

4. OE. ea: fallen (OE. feallan) *to fall,* pret. fēl(l, fel(l, fil(l (§ 99), pp. fallen. walken (OE. wealcan) *to roll,* pret. wēlk (OE. wēolc, cp. § 92, 2). pp. walken beside weak pret. and pp. walked.

fōlden, N. fālden, S. fēlden (OE. fealdan, § 71) *to fold,* pret. fēld beside weak fōlded(e, &c., pp. fōlden, &c. beside weak fōlded. hōlden, N. hālden, S. hēlden (OE. healdan, § 71) *to hold,* pret. hēld, held (helt), hild (hilt), see § 99, pp. hōlden, &c. wōlden, N. wālden, S. wēlden (OE. wealdan, § 71) *to rule,* pret. wēld(e, wēlt(e beside the new formations wōlde, wāld(e, wēld(e, pp. wōlden, &c., in later ME. also weak pret. and pp. wēlded.

5. OE. āw: blōwen blọuwen, N. blauwen, blau (OE. blāwan) *to blow,* pret. blęw (OE. blēow, § 112, 1), also weak blọwed(e, pp. blọwen, N. blawen, beside weak blọwed. And similarly crọwen, knọwen, mọwen, sọwen, þrọwen. swọpen, swọpen (§ 128) beside the new formation swēpen *to sweep,* pret. swēp beside the new formations swọp(e, swọp(e, weak swēped(e, swepte, pp. swọpen, swọpen, weak swōped, swōped, swēped.

6. OE. ōw, ōg : grọwen (OE. grōwan, see § 114, 1) *to grow,* pret. gręw beside weak grọwed(e, pp. grọwen. And similarly blọwen (weak pret. also blọude) *to blossom,* flọwen *to flow,* rọwen *to row.* swọȝen, swọwen (OE. swōgan, § 114, 2 (*b*)) *to sound.* pret. swēȝ, swei (§ 107, 6), pp. swọȝen, swọwen.

7. OE. ē: **wēpen** (OE. **wēpan,** Goth. **wōpjan**) *to weep,* pret. **wēp** beside weak **wepte** (§ 92, 1), pp. **wōpen** (OE. **wōpen**) beside weak **wept.**

8. OE. ēa: **bēten** (OE. **bēatan**) *to beat,* pret. **bēt** beside shortened form **bett,** and weak **bēted(e, bette,** pp. **bēten** beside weak **bett(e. hēwen** (OE. **hēawan**) *to hew,* pret. **hēw** (**hēu**) beside weak **hēwed(e, pp. hēwen** beside weak **hēwed. lēpen** (OE. **hlēapan**) *to leap,* pret. **lēp** (OE. **hlēop**), **lep(pe** beside weak **lēped(e, lēpte,** pp. **lōpen** after the analogy of class IV (§ 407, cp. also § 409).

B. WEAK VERBS

§ 415. The weak verbs, which for the most part are derivative and denominative, form by far the greater majority of all verbs. In OE. they are divided into three classes according to the endings of the infinitive, pret. in-dicative, and past participle. These endings are:—

Inf.	Pret.	P.P.
an	·ede, ·de, ·te	·ed, ·d̄, ·t
ian	·ode	·od
an	·de	·d

Each of the classes I and II contained a large number of verbs, whereas class III only contained four verbs, viz. **habban** *to have,* **libban** *to live,* **secgan** *to say,* and **hycgan** *to think,* the last of which did not survive in ME.

The OE. normal endings of the present of these three classes were:—

I. Sing. ·e, ·est, ·eþ, pl. ·aþ, inf. ·an
II. „ ·ie, ·ast, ·aþ, „ ·iaþ, „ ·ian
III. „ ·e, ·ast, ·aþ, „ ·aþ, „ ·an

WS. generally had syncopated forms in the second and third person singular of verbs belonging to class I, as setst, set(t) for older setest, seteþ, and these syncopated forms also remained in the ME. southern dialects. The OE. verbs of class I containing an r preceded by a short vowel had an ·i· in the present first pers. singular, the present plural, the present subjunctive singular and plural, the present participle, and the infinitive, as werie, weriaþ; werie, werien; weriende, werian *to defend*. In ME. the Midland and northern dialects generalized the forms without ·i·, whereas the Kentish and southern dialects retained the ·i·, as M. and N. wēre, S. wĕrie, &c., and similarly an(d)·sweren, dēren *to injure*, ēren *to plough*, fēren *to carry*, stiren *to stir*.

After the ·a· had been weakened to ·e· (§ 134 (b)) the endings of class I and class III became alike; in class II the Midland and northern dialects generalized the endings without ·i·, so that in these dialects the present of all three classes fell together, whereas the endings ·ie, ·ieþ, ·ien remained in the Kentish and southern dialects. For the personal endings of the present in the various ME. dialects see § 391. The verbs of class I which had double consonants in the first person singular and the plural generally levelled out the double consonants (except bb, and gg = OE. cg) into the second and third person singular, as sette, settest, setteþ = OE. sette, setst, set(t); telle, tellest, telleþ = OE. telle, tel(e)st, tel(e)þ. In the Midland and northern dialects the verbs containing ·bb·, ·cg· in OE. were remodelled in ME. from the second and third persons singular, as bīen bȳen *to buy*, aswēven *to stupefy*, leien *to lay*, beside OE. bycgan, āswebban, lecgan; and similarly haven, liven, seien saien *to say*, beside OE. habban, libban, secgan of the third class.

§ 416. The OE. normal endings of the preterite and past participle of the three classes were :—

Sing. -ede, -edest, -ede, pl. -edon, pp. -ed : fremede

<div style="text-align:center">*I performed*</div>

I   ,,   -de, -dest, -de,   ,,   -don,   ,,   -ed : dēmde

<div style="text-align:center">*I judged*</div>

   ,,   -te, -test, -te,   ,,   -ton,   ,,   -ed : drencte

<div style="text-align:center">*I submerged*</div>

II   ,,   -ode, -odest, -ode, ,,   -odon,   ,,   -od : lōcode

<div style="text-align:center">*I looked*</div>

III   ,,   -de -dest, -de,   ,,   -don,   ,,   -d : hæfde

<div style="text-align:center">*I had*</div>

The OE. verbs of class I generally had -ede in the preterite when the stem-syllable was originally short, but -de when the stem-syllable was originally long, and -te after voiceless consonants. Those verbs which had -te in OE. had it also in ME. In ME. we also often have -te after l, m, n, and in stems ending in -ld, -nd, -rd with shortening of a preceding long vowel, see § 270. Already in OE. the preterite of class III was the same as the preterite in -de of class I. And after the -o- had been weakened to -e- in class II the preterite of this class became the same as the preterite in -ede of class I. So that in early ME. the preterite sing. of all weak verbs ended either in -ede or -de (-te), and the plural in -eden or -den (-ten). The endings of the preterite indicative and the preterite subjunctive regularly fell together in ME. except that the indicative had -est in the second person singular.

§ 417. In ME. the final -e disappeared at an early period in those verbs which preserved the medial -e- of -ede, as loved (a new formation for lovẹde), mãked, þanked, beside hĕrde, bledde, kiste. The final -e of the singular and the final -en (§ 147) of the plural of all weak verbs disappeared at an early period in the northern dialects, and likewise the -est of the second pers. singular often disappeared, so that in these dialects all forms of the singular and plural came to be

alike. The final ·e also ceased to be pronounced at an early period in the Midland and southern dialects, although it continued to be written long after it had ceased to be pronounced, but the ending ·est (§ 150) of the second person singular generally remained. For the loss or retention of medial and final e in trisyllabic and polysyllabic forms see §§ 154–5.

CLASS I.

§ 418. Before beginning to treat the history of the preterite and past participle of the OE. first class of weak verbs in ME. it will be advisable to state here certain vowel and consonant changes which took place partly in OE. and partly in ME. :—

1. Long vowels were shortened before certain consonant combinations (§ 87), as blēden *to bleed*, bledde, ybled; clēþen *to clothe*, cledde, cladde, ycled, yclad; fēlen *to feel*, felte, yfelt; hēren *to hear*, hĕrde, yhĕrd; kēpen *to keep*, kepte, ykept; kīþen *to make known*, kidde, ykid; lēden *to lead*, ledde, ladde, yled, ylad; mēten *to meet*, mette, ymet.

2. d became t after voiceless consonants in OE., and when two dentals thus came together they became tt which were simplified to t when final (§ 239), as drencte : drencan *to submerge*, cyste : cyssan *to kiss*, grētte : grētan *to greet*, and similarly in ME.

3. Double consonants were simplified in OE. before and after other consonants, as cyste : cyssan, fylde : fyllan, gewielde : gewieldan *to overpower*, gyrde : gyrdan *to gird*, sende : sendan, reste : restan (*EOE. Gr.* § 145), and similarly in ME.

4. After liquids and nasals, and in stems ending in ·ld, ·nd, ·rd we often or generally have t in the preterite and past participle, whereas OE. had d, see § 270 ; as bilte (OE. bylde), bilt *built*; dwelte, dwelt; felte, felt; girte, girt;

dremte (drempte, cp. § 251), dremt; blente, blent *blended*, sente, sent.

5. On preterites and past participles like dreinte, ydreint: drenchen; meinde, ymeind : mengen, and similarly blenchen *to flinch*, quenchen, sprengen, &c., see § 263.

§ 419. The OE. verbs with an original short stem-syllable had -ede in the preterite and -ed in the past participle, as werien *to defend*, werede, gewered ; fremman *to perform*, fremede, gefremed, and similarly derian *to injure*, erian *to plough*, ferian *to carry*, styrian *to stir*, dynnan *to resound*, &c., see *EOE. Gr.* §§ 367–8. If through analogical formation the stem-syllable became long in ME. the preterite and past participle regularly had -ed, but if the stem-syllable remained short the preterite regularly had -de and the past participle -ed, as wẹren, wẹred, ywẹred ; frẹmen, frẹmed, yfrẹmed, but stiren, stirde, ystired ; dinen, dinde, ydined, but there were numerous analogical formations in both directions, see § 153. On the preterite and past participle of verbs like an(d)sweren, gaderen, see § 155.

§ 420. Verbs with an original long stem-syllable which in OE. had -de in the preterite and -ed in the past participle generally had these in ME. also, as dẹlen, dẹlde, ydẹled, dẹmen *to judge*, dẹmde beside the new formation dẹmed(e), ydẹmed, see *EOE. Gr.* § 373. The -e- in the past participle was very often syncopated, which in OE. only took place in the inflected forms, as ydẹld, yhẹrd : hẹren *to hear*, and similarly deien dīen *to die*, hẹlen, lẹren *to teach*, stẹren *to steer*, see § 151.

§ 421. When the stem-syllable ended in -d preceded by a long vowel the long vowel was shortened in the preterite and past participle (§ 91, 2), and when the -e- in the past participle had disappeared the dd was simplified to d, as blẹden, bledde, ybled ; lẹden, ledde, ladde, yled, ylad ; and similarly chīden, fẹden, hīden, spẹden, &c.

§ 422. When the stem ended in v, l, m, n, or nd, ld, rd

the preterite and past participle generally had t in ME., as lēven *to leave,* lefte, yleft beside ylēved; and similarly clēven *to cleave.* fēlen, felte, yfelt; lēnen *to lend,* lente, ylent; senden, sente, ysent; and similarly benden, blenden, wenden. bīlden, bilte, ybilt; girden, girte, ygirt, see § 270.

§ 423. þ+d became dd which was simplified to d in the past participle, as clēþen *to clothe,* cledde, cladde, ycled, yclad; kīþen *to make known,* kidde, ykid.

§ 424. Verbs which had the preterite in -te in OE. also had it in ME., as kissen, kiste, ykissed beside ykist; kēpen, kepte, ykēped beside ykept; and similarly with the following verbs which were strong in OE., but became weak in ME.: crēpen *to creep,* lēpen *to leap,* slēpen, slēpen *to sleep,* wēpen *to weep.*

§ 425. When the stem ended in t the tt was simplified to t in the past participle, as mēten, mette, ymet, and similarly grēten, swēten *to sweat.* When the stem ended in st, nt the tt was simplified to t in the preterite and past participle, as resten, reste, yrest; and similarly casten, lasten, stinten, þirsten, &c.

§ 426. OE. had a certain number of verbs belonging to class I which had umlaut in the present but not in the preterite and past participle, see *EOE. Gr.* § 379. Many of these verbs preserved this characteristic in ME., as bȳen (biggen, beggen, büggen = OE. bycgan, § 49) *to buy,* bou̯ʒte, ybou̯ʒt. tellen, tōlde (telde), ytōld (yteld); and similarly sellen. ME. new formations were: dwelde, dwelte, ydwelled, ydwelt; and similarly quellen *to kill.* rēchen *to reach,* rau̯ʒte, yrau̯ʒt; and similarly lacchen *to catch, seize,* strecchen, and the AN. loan-word cacchen. tēchen, tau̯ʒte, ytau̯ʒt. sēken (sēchen), sou̯ʒte, ysou̯ʒt; and similarly bisēken (bisēchen). bringen, brou̯ʒte, ybrou̯ʒt. þenken, þinken (þenchen), þou̯ʒte, yþou̯ʒt. me þinkeþ *it seems to me,* me þuʒte, þou̯ʒte. wirken, wirchen,

worchen, wurchen (early OE. wyrcan, see § 123), pret.
wrǫuȝte (§ 113, 4), west Midland warȝte, wraȝte (OE.
worhte), pp. ywrǫuȝt (OE. geworht), cp. § 244.

§ 427. The conjugation of the preterite of wēren *to defend*,
hēren *to hear*, tellen *to count*, and kissen *to kiss* will serve
as models of all verbs of class I :—

Indicative.

Sing.	1.	wēred(e)	hĕrde	tǫlde	kiste
	2.	wēredest	hĕrdest	tǫldest	kistest
	3.	wēred(e)	hĕrde	tǫlde	kiste
Plur.		wēred(en)	hĕrden	tǫlden	kisten

Subjunctive.

Sing.	wēred(e)	hĕrde	tǫlde	kiste
Plur.	wēred(en)	hĕrden	tǫlden	kisten

Class II.

§ 428. It has been shown in § 415 that the ME. inflexion of
the verbs belonging to this class regularly fell together with
that of verbs of the type wēren (OE. werian) of class I, as
present singular þanke, þankest, þankeþ, plural þanken,
•es; preterite singular þanked(e), þankedest, þanked(e),
plural þanked(en); and similarly asken (axen), clensen,
clǫþen, enden, folwen, grǫpen, halwen *to hallow*, hāten,
hǫpen, lernen, līken *to please*, lǫken, offren, schēwen
(schǫwen, § 111 note) *to show*, sorwen *to sorrow, grieve*,
spāren, spellen *to relate*, þǫlen *to bear, suffer*, wundren, &c.,
but loven, pret. lovęde beside loved(e), see § 153. Only
a small number of verbs had syncopated beside unsyncopated
forms in the preterite and past participle, as birēven (OE.
berēafian), birefte, bireft, beside birēved(e), birēved; clēpen

(OE. cliopian, cleopian) *to call,* clepte, yclept beside
clẹpède(e), yclẹped ; māken, māde, ymād, ymaad (§ 250)
beside māked(e), ymāked ; pleien (OE. plegian) *to play,*
pleide, ypleid beside pleied(e), ypleied.

<div style="text-align:center">CLASS III.</div>

§ 429. ME. only preserved three of the four OE. verbs
belonging to this class (§ 415), viz. haven (OE. habban),
liven (OE. libban), sei(e)n sai(e)n (OE. secgan = ME. S.
seggen, Ken. ziggen) *to say.* The presents of these verbs
were new formations. from the second and third persons sin-
gular which in OE. had a single consonant, as hafast (hæfst),
hafaþ (hæfþ). In ME. the preterite and past participle
lived(e) (OE. lifde), ylived (OE. gelifd) beside the preterite
livẹde were new formations after the analogy of the second
class of verbs, see § 153. The preterite saide beside the
southern form sẹde corresponded to OE. sægde beside
sǣde. The verb haven (habben) has a large number both
of contracted and uncontracted forms, for which see *N. E. D.*
s. v. The following are the more common forms of the
present and preterite indicative, the infinitive and the past
participle :—

	Present.	*Preterite.*
Sing. 1.	habbe, have, ha	hafde, havẹde, had(d)e (see § 43 note)
2.	havest, hast	had(d)est. had(e)st
3.	haveþ, haþ	hafde, havẹde, had(d)e
Plur.	habbeþ, -en, -es, haveþ, have(n), han	had(d)e(n)
Inf.	habbe(n), have(n)	pp. yhaved, yhadde, (y)had

AN. OR O.FR. VERBS IN ME.

§ 430. All the AN. verbs were weak in ME. except strīven (O.Fr. estriver), which became strong. The ME. verbs were generally based on the AN. strong or accented stem-form of the present, as accūsen, awaiten, blāmen, carien, claimen, escāpen, marien, stūdien, &c.

§ 431. The verbs in -ir generally had the extended stem-form -isch- (§ 278), as banischen, finischen, punischen, vanischen, &c., but obeyen, sēsen *to seize*, and rejǫisen did not have the extended stem-form. Some ME. verbs were based on the weak or end accented form of the present, as deceiven, preien, preisen *to praise*, serven, deneien beside denȳen, coveren beside keveren, mǫven beside mēven, prǫven beside prēven, see § 198.

§ 432. The preterite was formed in -ed, pl. ed(en), and the past participle in -ed (see §§ 153, 155), except when the stem ended in a long vowel or diphthong, as blāmen, blāmed; defenden, defended; assenten, assented; finischen, finisched; marien, maried; prēchen *to preach*, prēched, &c. When the stem ended in a long vowel the preterite, but not the past participle, had a syncopated beside an unsyncopated form, as crȳen, crȳde beside crȳed, pp. crȳed; and similarly defȳen, espȳen, &c. When the stem ended in a diphthong both the preterite and past participle had syncopated and unsyncopated forms side by side, as preien *to pray*, preide, preid beside preied, preied; and similarly anoien, bitraien, paien, &c.

C. MINOR GROUPS

1. PRETERITE-PRESENTS.

§ 433. These verbs were originally unreduplicated strong perfects which acquired a present meaning like Gr. οἶδα = OE. wāt *I know*. In prim. Germanic a new weak preterite,

an infinitive, a present participle, and in some verbs a strong past participle, were formed. They are inflected in the present like the preterite of strong verbs, except that the second person singular has the same stem-vowel as the first and third persons, and has preserved the old ending -t (*EOE. Gr.* § 324). The following verbs of this type were preserved in ME. and are here arranged according to the class of strong verbs with which they are related:—

§ 434. Class I: N. wāt *I know*, wās(t), wāt (cp. § 100), M. and S. wǭt, wǭst, wǭt, pl. wite(n (wā̆t, wǭt), wute(n, cp. § 39; inf. wite(n, wute(n; pres. part. witand(e), witend(e), witind(e), witing(e); pret. wiste, wuste; pp. wist. For forms like nǭt, nāt, pret. niste, see § 245.

§ 435. Class III: an, on *I grant*, also the new formations unne, unnest, unne from the plural, pl. unnen; pret. ūþe (ouþė); pp. unned.

N. can, canst, can, pl. can, M. and S. can (con), canst (const, cunne), can (con), pl. cunnen (connen); inf. cunnen (connen); subj. cunne (conne); participial adj. N. cunnand *cunning*; pret. couþe, coude (§ 274); pp. couþ.

dar *I dare*, darst, dar, pl. durren (dorren); inf. durren; pret. dorste beside the new formation durste with u from the inf. and pres. pl.; pp. durst. þarf (þar, § 248) *I need*, þarft (þurve), þarf (þar), pl. þurven; pret. þorfte (OE. þorfte) beside þurfte formed from the inf. and pres. plural, þorte (þurte).

§ 436. Class IV: M. and N. sing. and pl. mun, mon *shall, will*, pret. munde, monde; ON. inf. muna *to remember*.

N. sing. and pl. sal (§ 289 note) *shall*, M. and S. schal (Ken. ssel), schalt, schal, pl. schulen beside the new formation scholen with o from the preterite, whence were formed the new singular schul, schol; subj. schule, pret. N suld, M. and S. schŏlde beside schǭlde (§ 71), and schulde formed from the pres. plural.

§ 437. Class V: mai may (Orm maȝȝ, OE. mæg, § 106)

beside mei mey (OE. meg,.§ 107, 1) *I, he can*, miʒt (late OE.
miht) beside maʒt, mauʒt, Orm mahht (early OE. meaht,
§ 110, 5), meiʒt (§ 107), later ME. maist(e *thou canst*, pl.
maʒen, māʒen, mawen (§ 110, 3), also N. mai (may), muʒen
(Orm muʒhenn), muwen, mowen, mown (moun), mow
(mou, mū), see § 122, 5; subj. maʒe (mawe), muʒe (Orm
muʒhe), muwe (mowe); pres. part. maʒende (Ken.
meʒende), mowende, mouwinge, mowing; inf. muʒen
(Orm muʒhen), mowen, mown (moun), mow (mou); pret.
miʒte (Orm mihhte), moʒt(e, muʒt(e, mouʒte.

§ **438.** Class VI: mǭt *may, must*, mǭst, mǭt beside later
ME. unaccented mut(t, must, mut(t, pl. mǭten ; pret. mǭste
beside the early ME. shortened and unaccented forms moste,
muste, pl. mǭsten beside mosten, musten.

§ **439.** Class VII: N. sing and pl. āʒ āgh *possess, own*,
early M. āʒ, auʒ, awe, M. and S. ǭʒ (ǫuʒ), ǫwe (ǫwest), ǭʒ
(ǫuʒ), pl. ǭʒen, ǫwen (§ 113, 3); inf. N. āʒe(n), early M. āʒen
(Orm āʒhenn), M. and S. ǭʒen, ǫwen; pret. N. ǎʒt(e)
ǎght(e), early M. ǎʒte, auʒte, M. and S. ǫuʒte ; pp. āʒen,
ǫwen.

2. ANOMALOUS VERBS.

§ **440.** *a.* THE SUBSTANTIVE VERB.

Present.

	N.	M. and S.
Sing. 1.	am (es)	am (em)
2.	art (ert, es)	art (ert)
3.	es	is
Plur.	ar(e), er(e), es	are(n), arn
Sing. 1.	(bę)	bę
2.	bę̄s	bist (bę̄st)
3.	bę̄s	biþ (bę̄þ)
Plur.	bę̄s	bę̄n, bę̄þ
Subj.	bę̄, pl. bę̄s	bę̄, pl. bę̄n, bę̄þ

Preterite.

		M.	S.
Sing. 1.	was (wes), § 43 note	was (wes)	was (wes)
2.	was (wes)	wẹ̄re (wǭre), § 166	wẹ̄re
3.	was (wes)	was (wes)	was (wes)
Plur.	war(e), wes	wẹ̄ren (wǭren), § 166	wẹ̄ren
P.P.	bẹ̄n	bẹ̄n	bẹ̄n, ybẹ̄

NOTE.—The es of the present second and third persons sing. in the northern dialects is of ON. origin (ON. es *art*, *is*). es was then extended to the first pers. sing. and to the plural; of the same origin is the pl. form er(e) = ON. ero *they are*, and ern with the OE. ending -n (OE. earon, aron). The OE. pl. forms sind (sint), sindon *they are* lingered on in ME. until the thirteenth century, and then became obsolete, as sind (sint), sinden (Orm sinndenn). The ẹ̄ in the M. and S. sing. forms bẹ̄st (OE. bist), bẹ̄þ (OE. biþ) was due to levelling out the ē from the other forms where it was regular.

§ 441.   *b.* THE VERB dǭn *to do.*

Present.

		N.	M.	S.
Sing. 1.		dǭ	dǭ	dǭ
2.		dǭs	dǭst	dẹ̄st (dǭst)
3.		dǭs	dǭþ	dẹ̄þ (doþ)
Pl.		dǭs	dǭn	dǭþ
Imper.		dǭ, pl. dǭs	dǭ, pl. dǭþ	dǭ, pl. dǭþ

On the forms of the second and third pers. singular, see § 394, 2.

Pres. Part.: early ME. dǭnde, later N. dǭand(e, M. dǭende, S. dǭinde, dǭing(e, cp. § 391.

Preterite: dide, dede, düde (OE. dyde, see § 49) inflected like a weak preterite. P.P. dǭn, ydǭn, S. ydǭ.

§ 442.   *c.*   THE VERB gān (gǭn) *to go.*

Present.

	N.	M.	S.
Sing. 1.	gā	gǭ	gǭ
2.	gās	gǭst	gēst (gǭst)
3.	gās	gǭþ	gēþ (gǭþ)
Plur.	gās	gǭn	gǭþ
Imper.	gā, pl. gās	gǭ, pl. gǭþ	gǭ, gǭþ

On the forms of the second and third pers. sing., see § 394, 2.

Preterite: ʒēde (ʒǭde, § 65 note), and wente.   P.P. gān, gǭn, ygǭn.

§ 443.   *d.*   THE VERB willen *will.*

Present first and third pers. sing. wille, wil(e (OE. wille, third pers. wile, wille), welle, wel(e, wel(l (OE. Anglian welle) beside the new formations wole, wolle, wule, wulle from the preterites with o, u, and similarly second pers. sing. wilt (OE. wilt) beside wolt, wult, pl. willen, wilen, wiln, ·eþ, welen, wel(e, well(e beside wol(l)en, wul(l)en, ·eþ; inf. willen, wilen (Orm wilenn); pret. wŏlde (wollde, wold), wǭlde (§§ 71, 101) beside wulde formed after the analogy of schulde (§ 436), wilde formed direct from the present, northern and west Midland walde (OE. Anglian walde); pp. wŏld(e.

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